

Boris Bazhanov **Memoirs of Stalin's former secretary**



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Memoirs of Boris Bazhanov is one of the first memoirs describing Stalin as a dictator and his entourage from the inside. The special value of this book, published for the first time abroad, lies in its authenticity, in the fact that it belongs to Stalin's direct assistant, who since 1923 held the position of technical secretary of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks.

After escaping in 1928 through Persia to the West, Boris Bazhanov published a series of articles and a book in France, the main interest of which was to describe the real mechanism of totalitarian communist power, which gradually squeezed the whole country in the grip of political terror. The book details the behind-the-scenes political intrigues in the Kremlin, starting with the expulsion of Trotsky, as well as Stalin's subsequent actions to eliminate his associates and rivals from the political scene - Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov, Frunze, Bukharin, and others. Many chapters of B. Bazhanov's memoirs are perceived as action-packed political and criminal detective story. Stalin was afraid of the revelations of B. Bazhanov and,

according to some evidence, was the most zealous reader of his publications: as defectors from the Soviet embassy in France later showed, Stalin demanded that every new article of his former secretary be immediately sent to him by plane to Moscow.

Boris Bazhanov's book was published in France by the Third Wave publishing house in 1980. Chapters from the book about B. Bazhanov's escape across the state border were published in Ogonyok. The new edition of "Memoirs of the Former Secretary of Stalin" will undoubtedly be of interest to many readers who want to know the truth about events and facts that have been carefully hidden from the people for political reasons for more than seventy years.

Boris Bazhanov
Memoirs of Stalin's former secretary

Author's Preface

My reminiscences relate mainly to the period when I was assistant to the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party) Stalin and secretary of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Soviet Union. I was appointed to these positions on August 9, 1923. Becoming an anti-communist, I fled Soviet Russia on January 1, 1928 across the Persian border. in France in 1929 and 1930. I have published some of my observations in the form of newspaper articles and a book. Their main interest was in describing the real mechanism of communist power - at that time very little known in the West, some of the bearers of this power and some of the historical events of this era. In my descriptions, I have always tried to be scrupulously accurate, describing only what I saw or knew with unconditional accuracy. The Kremlin authorities never made the slightest attempt to dispute what I wrote (and they could not have done so), and preferred to opt for the tactic of complete silence - my name was not to be mentioned anywhere. The most zealous reader of my articles was Stalin: later defectors from the Soviet embassy in France testified that Stalin demanded that any new article of mine be immediately sent to him by airplane.

Meanwhile, being perfectly accurate in my descriptions of facts and events, I, by agreement with my friends who remained in Russia, and for the sake of their better security, had to change one detail that concerned me personally: the date when I became an anti-communist. It did not play any role in my descriptions - they did not change whether I became an opponent of communism two years earlier or later. But, as it turned out, this put me personally in a position that was very unpleasant for me (in one of the last chapters of the book, when I describe the preparation of my flight abroad, I will explain how and why my friends asked me to do this). In addition, I could not write about many facts and people - they were alive. For example, I could not tell what Lenin's personal secretary told me on a very important issue - it could cost her dearly. Now, when about half a century has passed and most of the people of this era are no longer alive, you can write about almost everything without risking anyone under a Stalinist bullet in the back of the head. In addition, now describing those historical events that I witnessed, I can tell the reader about the conclusions and

conclusions that followed from their direct observation. I hope that this will help the reader to better understand the essence of these events and in this whole segment of the era of the communist revolution.

Chapter 1

GYMNASIUM. UNIVERSITY. SHOT DEMONSTRATION. JOINING THE PARTY. YAMPOL AND MOGILEV. MOSCOW. HIGHER TECHNICAL SCHOOL. DISCUSSION ABOUT TRADE UNIONS. Kronstadt Uprising. NEP. TEACHER.

I was born in 1900 in the city of Mogilev-Podolsky in Ukraine. When the February Revolution of 1917 came, I was a 7th grade student at the gymnasium. In the spring and summer of 1917, the city experienced all the events of the revolution and, above all, the gradual disintegration of the old order of life. With the October Revolution, this disintegration accelerated. The front collapsed, Ukraine separated. Ukrainian nationalists challenged the Bolsheviks for power in Ukraine. But at the beginning of 1918, German troops occupied Ukraine, and with their support, some order was restored, and a rather strange power of Hetman Skoropadsky was established, formally Ukrainian-nationalist, in reality vaguely conservative.

Life returned to a somewhat more normal course, classes at the gymnasium were going well again, and in the summer of 1918 I graduated from the gymnasium, and in September I went to continue my studies at the Kiev University at the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics. Alas, teaching at the university

did not last long. By November, the defeat of Germany was determined, and the German troops began to leave Ukraine. Revolutionary activity was seething at the university - rallies, speeches. The authorities closed the university. At that time, I was not involved in any politics - at my 18 years old, I thought that I did not understand the basic issues of social life enough. But like most students, I was very dissatisfied with the interruption of teaching - I came to Kyiv from a distant province to study. Therefore, when a student demonstration was announced in the street against the university building in protest against its closure, I went to this demonstration.

Here I learned a very important lesson. A detachment of the "sovereign varta" (state police) arrived on trucks, dismounted, lined up and, without the slightest warning, opened fire on the demonstration. It must be said that at the sight of the rifles, the crowd rushed in all directions. Three or four dozen people remained against the rifles, who considered it beneath their dignity to run like hares at the mere sight of the police. Those who remained were either killed (twenty people) or wounded (also twenty people). I was among the wounded. The bullet hit the jaw, but slid over it, and I got off with two or three weeks in the hospital.

The teaching stopped, the struggle between the Bolsheviks and the Ukrainian nationalists resumed, and I returned to my hometown to recover and reflect on the course of events in which I began to take part against my will. Until the summer of 1919, I read a lot, tried to understand Marxism and revolutionary teachings and programs. In 1919, a civil

war unfolded and the White armies attacked Moscow from the outskirts to the center. But our corner of Podolia lay aloof from this campaign, and the power in our country was challenged only by the Petliurists and the Bolsheviks. In the summer of 1919 I decided to join the Communist Party. For us, the student youth,

communism at that time seemed an extraordinarily interesting attempt to create a new, socialist society. If I wanted to take part in political life, then here, in my provincial reality, I had only a choice between Ukrainian nationalism and communism. Ukrainian nationalism did not attract me in the least - it was associated for me with some sort of retreat back from the heights of Russian culture in which I was brought up. I was by no means delighted with the practice of communism, as it looked in the life around me, but I told myself (and I am not alone) that one cannot demand much from these uncultured and primitive Bolsheviks from illiterate workers and peasants who understood and implemented slogans of communism in a wild way; and that it is precisely people who are more educated and versed should correct these mistakes and build a new society in such a way that it is much more in line with the ideas of leaders who, somewhere far away, in distant centers, of course, act, wishing the people well. The bullet that I received in Kyiv did not really affect my political consciousness. But the question of the war played

a significant role for me. All the last years of my youth I was struck by the picture of many years of senseless slaughter that the first world war

represented. Despite my youth, I clearly understood that no war could bring anything to any of the warring countries that could be compared with millions of victims and colossal destruction. I realized that fighter technology had reached such a limit that the old way of solving disputes between the great powers by war lost all meaning. And if the leaders of these powers are inspired by the old policy of nationalism, which was permissible a century ago, when it was a two-month journey from Paris to Moscow, and countries could live independently of each other, then now, when the life of all countries is connected (and from Paris to Moscow two days away), these heads of state are bankrupt and bear a large share of the responsibility for the revolutions that follow the wars, breaking the old order of life. At that time, I took at face value the Zimmerwald and Kienthal protests of the internationalists against the war - only much later I realized how delighted the Leninists were from the war - only it could bring them a revolution. Having joined the local party organization, I was soon elected secretary of the district organization. Characteristically, I immediately had to fight the Chekists sent from the provincial center to organize a local check. This county

check

requisitioned the house of the notary Afeniev (a rich and harmless old man) and shot his owner. I demanded from the party organization the immediate closure of the checks and the expulsion of the security officers to Vinnitsa (provincial center). The organization hesitated. But I quickly convinced her. The city was Jewish, most of the party members were Jews. Power changed every two or three months. I asked the organization if it understood that the Jewish population would be responsible for the senseless executions of Chekist sadists, who would be threatened with pogrom during the next change of power. The organization understood and supported me. The check was closed.

Soviet power did not last long. The Petliurites have arrived. For some time I was in Zhmerynka and Vinnitsa, where in January 1920 I was unexpectedly appointed head of the provincial department of public education. This career of mine was interrupted by relapsing fever, and then by the news of my parents' death from typhus. I hurried to my hometown. There were also Petliurists. But they did not touch me - the local population vouched that I was an "ideological communist", who did nothing but good for anyone and, on the contrary, saved the city from the Chekist terror. Soon the power changed again - the Bolsheviks came. Then the Bolsheviks retreated

again. The Soviet-Polish war began. But by the summer of 1920, the county town of Yampol was again occupied, and I was appointed a member and secretary of the Yampol Revolutionary Committee. After the revolution, Yampol hardly ever saw a more peaceful and benevolent government. The Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee, Andreev, and both members of the Revolutionary Committee - Trofimov and I - were peaceful and kind people. At least this must have been the opinion of the widow of the official, in whose house all three of us lived, and, having dinner at the same table with her, we ate half-starved (much to her surprise), despite all our power.

A month later, Mogilev was occupied; I was transferred there and again elected secretary of the county party committee.

In October the Soviet-Polish war ended, in November the Crimea was occupied; civil The war ended with the victory of the Bolsheviks. I decided to go to Moscow to continue my studies.

In November 1920 I arrived in Moscow and was admitted to the Moscow Higher Technical School. In the Higher

Technical School, of course, there was a local party cell. She lived a very weak party life. The Party believed that there was a huge shortage of loyal technical specialists in the country, and our business - Party students - was, above all, to study. Which is what we did.

Nevertheless, in the center I have already touched somewhat more closely on the life of the party. Now, after the end of the civil war, the country began to move on to peaceful construction. The communist methods of governing the country in the three years since the beginning of the Bolshevik revolution seemed to have been determined, but in the meantime they were subjected to fierce disputes at the top of the party during the famous discussion about trade unions, which took place just at the end of 1920. For all of us, the rank-and-file members of the Party, it looked like a dispute was going on about the methods of managing the economy, or rather, industry. It seemed that there was a point of view of a part of the party, headed by Trotsky, who believed that at first the army should be turned into a labor army and should restore the economy on the basis of cruel military discipline; part of the party (Shlyapnikov and the workers' opposition) believed that the management of the economy should be transferred to the trade unions; Finally, Lenin and his group were both against the labor armies and against the trade union management of the economy, and believed that the Soviet economic bodies should direct the economy, abandoning military methods. Lenin's point of view won, though not without difficulty. Only a few years later, already being the secretary of the Politburo, sorting through the old archival materials of the Politburo, I realized

that the discussion was far-fetched. In essence, this was Lenin's struggle for a majority in the Central Committee of the Party - Lenin was afraid at this moment of Trotsky's excessive influence, tried to weaken him and somewhat remove him from power. The question of trade unions, a rather secondary one, was artificially inflated. Trotsky sensed the reality of all this Leninist machination, and for almost two years, relations between him and Lenin cooled dramatically. In the subsequent struggle for power, this episode and its consequences played a big role.

In March 1921, at the time when the party congress was taking place, all members of the cell of the Higher Technical School were urgently summoned to the district committee of the party. We were told that

we were mobilized, we were given rifles and cartridges, we were assigned to factories that were mostly closed; we had to carry armed guards on them in order to prevent possible working uprisings against the authorities. These were the days of Kronstadt

uprisings.

For about two weeks, the three of us carried guards at a closed factory. With me was my friend, communist Yurka Akimov, a student like me, and a Russian German with blue eyes, Hans Lemberg. In a few years, when I am the secretary of the Politburo, I will nominate him for the post of secretary of the Sportintern. He will prove to be a schemer of the lowest brand. I'll lose sight of Yurka Akimov in two or three years. I recently learned from the Soviet Encyclopedia that he is an honored professor of metallurgy. At the party congress in

March, Lenin made a report on the replacement of the grain appropriation with a tax in kind. Throughout the official Soviet historical literature, this moment is portrayed as the introduction of the NEP. This is not entirely true. Lenin came to the idea of the NEP not so quickly. During the civil war and in the summer of 1920, bread was taken from the peasants by force. The authorities calculated approximately how much bread the peasants should have in which region, the figures for the planned withdrawal were distributed by districts and households, and then they took bread and products by force (food detachments) in the most brutal arbitrariness in order to somehow feed the army and cities. It was a stretch. At the same time, the peasants did not receive almost any industrial products in exchange - there were practically none. In the summer of 1920, peasant uprisings broke out; the most famous, Antonovskoe (in the Tambov province), continued until the summer of 1921. In addition, there was a significant decrease in crops - the peasant did not want to produce excess bread, which would have been taken away from him anyway. Lenin realized that things were heading towards disaster, and it was necessary to return from dogmatic communism to real life, restoring some meaning to the peasant in his economic work. The apportionment was replaced by a tax in kind - that is, the peasant was obliged to hand over a certain amount of products that represented the tax, and he could dispose of the rest.

The Kronstadt uprising pushed Lenin's thought further - hunger, general discontent and lack of industrial products reigned in the country. It was possible to restore not only agriculture, but the economy in general, only by giving the population an economic incentive, that is, to return from communist fantasy to a normal exchange economy. This is what Lenin proposed at the end of May at the 10th All-Russian Party Conference, but he completed the formulation of the NEP only at the end of October at the Moscow Provincial Party Conference (I will tell you later what his secretaries told me after his death about Lenin's innermost thoughts of this period).

I continued to study. I was elected party secretary. It's not very good for me hindered - the party life in the Higher Technical was deliberately inactive.

But throughout 1921, famine reigned in the country. There was no market. It was necessary to live exclusively on rations. It consisted of a pound (400 grams) of bread a day (a type of putty made up of God knows what leftovers and offal) and 4 rusty herrings a month. In the canteen of the School, once a day, they were given a little bit of millet porridge in water without the slightest trace of fat and for some reason without salt. It was impossible to hold out in this mode for a very long time. Fortunately, summer came, and it was possible to go to the factory for summer practice. Three of my comrades and I chose an internship at a sugar factory (we studied at the Faculty of Chemistry) in my native Mogilev district. There we fed ourselves: the ration was issued with sugar, and sugar could be exchanged for any food. In autumn I returned to Moscow and continued

my studies. Alas, on my hunger regime, by January I was again extremely emaciated and weakened. At the end of January 1922, I decided to leave for the Ukraine again. In the laboratory of quantitative analysis,

my neighbor was a handsome young student, Sasha Volodarsky. He was Volodarsky's brother; St. Petersburg commissar for the press, who was killed in the summer of 1918 by the worker Sergeev. Sasha Volodarsky was a very sweet and modest young man. When, having heard his last name, they asked him: "Tell me, are you a relative of that famous Volodarsky?" - he answered: "No, no, namesake." I asked his opinion on who to propose for my place in the secretary of the cell. Why? I

explained: I want to leave, I can't go on starving. Why

don't you do like me? Volodarsky asked. - How? - And I study half a day, I

work half a day in the Central Committee of the party. There are jobs that you can take home. By the way, the apparatus of the Central Committee is now greatly expanding, there is a need for competent workers. Try it. I tried. The fact that I was in

the past the secretary of the Ukom of the party and now the secretary of the cell in the Higher Technical School turned out to be a serious argument, and the Director of Affairs of the Central Committee Ksenofontov (by the way, a former member of the collegium of the Cheka), who made the first selection, sent me to the Organizational Department of the Central Committee, where I was accepted.

Chapter 2. In the organizational department. party charter

ORGANIZING DEPARTMENT OF THE CC. LOCAL EXPERIENCE. ARTICLE KAGANOVICH. PARTY CONGRESS. LENIN'S REPORT. DRAFT NEW CHARTER OF THE PARTY. KAGANOVICH, MOLOTOV, STALIN. MY CHARTER IS ADOPTED. PATCH, VOLODARSKII, MALENKOV. TIKHOMIRNOV. LAZAR KAGANOVICH. "WE, COMRADES, ARE FIFTY YEARS OLD..." MIKHAILOV. MOLOTOV. CIRCULAR COMMISSION. HANDBOOK OF A PARTY WORKER. Izvestia of the Central Committee

At this time there was an extraordinary expansion and strengthening of the party apparatus. Perhaps the most important department of the Central Committee at that time was the organizational and instructor department, where I ended up (it was soon merged with the administrative distribution department into the organizational distribution department - the organizational distribution department). Along with the main subdivisions (organizational, information), an unimportant subdivision was created - taking into account local experience. His functions were the most obscure. I was appointed as an ordinary employee of this subdivision. It consisted of the head - the old party member Rostopchin - and five ordinary employees. Rostopchin and three of his five subordinates looked at their work as a temporary sinecure. Rostopchin himself showed up once a week for a few minutes. When asked what, in fact, needs to be done, he smiled and said: "Take the initiative." Three out of five showed it in the sense that they could find a job that would suit them more; and in this they, however, soon succeeded. Reiter, after a series of complex intrigues, became a responsible instructor of the Central Committee, and then the secretary of some provincial committee. Kitsis patiently waited for Reiter's appointment, and when it happened, he left with him. Sorge (the wrong one, not the Japanese one) wanted to work abroad along the lines of the Comintern. The only one who tried to work was Nikolai Bogomolov, an Orekhovo-Zuevsky worker, a very nice and intelligent person. Subsequently, he became an assistant to the head of the organizational distribution for the selection of party workers, then deputy head of the organizational distribution, and then, for some reason, a trade representative in London. In the purge of 1937 he disappeared; probably died. At first I did almost nothing, looked closely and continued teaching. After the difficult year of 1921, my living conditions improved dramatically. Throughout 1921 in Moscow, I not only starved, but also lived in a difficult housing

situation. By order of the district council, we (me and my friend Yurka Akimov) were given a room requisitioned from the "bourgeois". There was no heating in it and not the slightest hint of any furniture (all the furniture consisted of a washing bowl and a jug of water standing on the windowsill). In winter, the temperature in the room dropped to 5 degrees below zero, and the water in the jug turned into ice. Fortunately, the floor was wooden, and Akimov and I, wrapped in sheepskin coats and huddled together for warmth, slept in a corner on the floor, placing books under our heads instead of non-existent pillows.

Now the situation has changed. The employees of the Central Committee lived in different conditions. I was assigned a room in the 5th House of Soviets - the former Patchwork Hotel (Tverskaya, 5), which everyone usually called the 5th House of the Central Committee, since only employees of the Central Committee of the Party lived in it. True, only privates, since very responsible people lived either in the Kremlin or in the 1st House of Soviets (corner of Tverskaya and Mokhovaya).

Although I did not work much, I soon had to deal with the head of the Organizational Department

Kaganovich.

Under his chairmanship, some sort of briefing meeting took place on questions of "Soviet construction." I was put in charge of the secretariat at this meeting (so easy, it came to hand). Kaganovich delivered an extremely sensible and intelligent speech. Of course, I didn't write it down, but only made minutes of the meeting.

A few days later, the editors of the Soviet Construction magazine asked Kaganovich for a leading article for the magazine. Kaganovich replied that he had no time. It wasn't true. The point was that an extremely capable and lively man, Kaganovich was extremely illiterate. A shoemaker by profession, who never received any education, he wrote with gross grammatical errors, and simply could not write literary. Since I was secretary at the meeting, the editors turned to me. I said I'll try.

Remembering what Kaganovich said, I put it in the form of an article. But since it was clear that all the thoughts in it were not mine, but Kaganovich's, I went to him and said: "Comrade Kaganovich, here is your article on Soviet construction - I wrote down what you said at the meeting." Kaganovich read it and was delighted: "Indeed, that's all I said; but how well it is stated. I replied that the presentation is a completely secondary matter, and his thoughts, and he only needs to sign the article and send it to the journal. Due to inexperience, Kaganovich was shy: "You wrote it, not me." I assured him, not without difficulty, that I had simply written for him to buy him time. The article has been printed. You should have seen how proud Kaganovich was - it was "his" first article. He showed it to everyone.

This incident had consequences. At the end of March - beginning of April, the next congress of the party took place. I, like many other young employees of the Organizational Department, was sent for technical work to help the secretariat of the congress. At the congress, a number of commissions are formed - mandate, editorial, etc. They are formed by old party beards - members of the Central Committee and prominent workers from the field, but the work is done by young employees of the Central Committee apparatus. In particular, in the editorial commission, where I was sent, the work goes like this. The speaker speaks at the congress. The stenographer records his speech and, transcribing the transcript, dictates to the typist. This first text is full of errors and distortions - the stenographer did not understand much, she did not hear much, she did not manage to write down something. But each speaker is assigned an employee of the editorial commission, who is obliged to carefully listen to the speech. He makes the first edit, bringing the text to an almost final form. Then the speaker only has to make minor additional corrections, and in this way his time is saved enormously.

At the congress, the political report of the Central Committee was made (for the last time) by Lenin. The question arose: which of the employees to entrust this work - to listen and edit. Kaganovich said: "To Comrade Bazhanov; he will do it excellently." And so it was decided.

The tribune of the congress towered a meter and a half above the floor of the hall. The Presidium of the Congress is on the podium. On the right (if you are facing the audience) at the edge of the tribune is a music stand, behind which stands the speaker; on the lectern are his subsidiary papers - in the early Soviet practice, reports were never written in advance; they improvised; at the most, the speaker had a brief plan on paper and some figures and quotations. In front of the music stand, a staircase descends into the hall: the speakers go up to the podium along it and descend into the hall. Since no one should go up to the podium during Lenin's report, I sat at the top of the stairs a meter from Lenin - so I'm sure that I will hear everything well.

During Lenin's report, the court photographer (Otsup, it seems) takes pictures. Lenin hates to be filmed for a movie during performances - this interferes with him and breaks the thread of thoughts. He barely settles for two inevitable official photos. The photographer shoots it from the left - then in the depths, in some fog, the presidium is visible; then he shoots from the right - only Lenin and the corner of the hall are visible behind him. But in both pictures in front of Lenin

- I.

These photos were often published in newspapers: "Vladimir Ilyich speaks for the last time at the Party Congress", "One of the last public speeches of Comrade Lenin." Until 1928, I always figured along with Lenin. In 1928 I fled abroad. When I got to Paris, I began to read Soviet newspapers. Soon I saw either in Pravda or in Izvestia

a familiar photograph: Vladimir Ilyich makes his last political report at the Party Congress. But I wasn't in the photo. Apparently, Stalin ordered that I from the photograph

disappeared.

In the spring of 1922, I gradually got involved in the work, but studied more. The observation post was very good, and I quickly got my bearings in the main processes of the life of the country and the party. Some details sometimes spoke more than long studies. For example, I can remember little about that 11th Party Congress (1922), which I attended, but I clearly remember the speech of Tomsy, a member of the Politburo and leader of the trade unions. He said: "We are being reproached abroad for having a regime of one party. This is not true. We have many parties. But unlike abroad, we have one party in power, and the rest are in prison." The audience responded with thunderous applause.

(Did Tomsy remember this speech fourteen years later, when the doors of the Stalinist prison opened before him? In any case, he shot himself, not wanting to cross its threshold.) Justice requires it to be noted that at that moment I still had confidence in my leaders: the rest of the parties in prison; It means that this is how it should be and this is better. In April-May of this year, I became aware

of how the evolution of power is taking place. It was obvious that power was more and more concentrated in the hands of the party, and the further, the more in the party apparatus. Meanwhile, one important circumstance caught my eye. The organizational forms of the work of the party and its apparatus, which determined the effectiveness of the work, were formulated in the form of its charter. But the party statutes basically had the form in which it was adopted in 1903. It was slightly changed at the VI Party Congress in the summer of 1917. The Eighth Party Conference of 1919 also introduced some timid changes, but in general the rules, suitable for the underground of pre-revolutionary times, were completely unsuitable for the party in power, and extremely hampered its work, not giving clear and precise necessary forms.

I set to work and drew up a draft of a new party statute. I changed it a lot. After checking everything, I typed two parallel texts on a typewriter: to the left - the old one, to the right - the new one, emphasizing all the changed places in the old and new places in my text.

With this document I came to Kaganovich. His secretary Balashov told me that Comrade Kaganovich was very busy and was not receiving anyone. I insisted: - And you still report.

Tell me I'm on a very important matter. "Well, what an important business you can have," Balashov reasoned with me. - And you still report. I won't leave until you tell me. Balashov reported. Kaganovich received me. - Comrade Bazhanov. I am really busy. Three minutes - what's the matter? "The fact is, Comrade Kaganovich, I have brought you a draft of a new party statute. Kaganovich was sincerely struck by my insolence. - How old are you, Comrade Bazhanov? - Twenty two. - And how many years have you been in the party? - Three years.

- Do you

know that in 1903 our party was divided into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks only on the issue of redrafting the first paragraph of the Rules? - Known. "And yet you dare to propose a new party

rule?" - I dare. - For what reasons? - Very simple. The Charter is extremely outdated, suitable

for the party in underground

conditions, does not correspond in any way to the life of the party that is in power, and does not give it the necessary forms for its work and evolution. -

Well, show me.

Kaganovich read the first and second paragraphs in the old edition and the new one, thought. - Did you write it

yourself? - Myself.

Demanded an explanation. I gave explanations. A few minutes later, Balashov's head poking through the door reminded him that there were people who were promised a reception, and it was time for some important meeting. Kaganovich drove him away:

"Very busy. I don't accept anyone. The meeting is rescheduled for

tomorrow. For about two hours Kaganovich read, savored and pondered my rules, demanding an explanation and excuses for my formulations. When it was all over, Kaganovich sighed and declared:

- Well, you made a mess, Comrade Bazhanov.

After that, he picked up the phone and asked Molotov if he could see him on an important matter (Molotov was at that time the second secretary of the Central

Committee). - If it won't be long,

come. Let's go, Comrade

Bazhanov. "Here," Kaganovich declared, going in to Molotov. "This young man offers no more, no less like a new party charter.

Molotov was also shocked. -

Does he know that in 1903 ... - Yes,

he knows.

- And yet?.. - And

yet. "And have

you read this draft, Comrade Kaganovich?" - Read.

- And

how do you find it? - I find

it excellent. - Well, show

me. The same

thing happened to Molotov. For two hours, the draft charter was discussed point by point, I gave an explanation, Molotov was curious:

- Did you write it yourself?

-

Myself. "Nothing can be done," Molotov said when they reached the end of the project. Let's go to Stalin. I

was also presented to Stalin as a young madman who dares to touch a venerable and inviolable shrine. After the same ritual questions - how old am I, do I know that in 1903, and after formulating the reasons why I believe that the charter should be redone, the reading and discussion of the draft was again started. Sooner or later Stalin's question came: "Did you write this yourself?" But this time it was followed by another: "Can you imagine what evolution, the work of the party and its life your text defines?" - and my answer is that I imagine and formulate this evolution very well in such and such a way. The point was that my rules were an important tool for the party apparatus in the matter of conquest of power. Stalin understood this. Me too. The end was peculiar. Stalin went to the turntable. "Vladimir Ilyich? Stalin. Vladimir Ilyich, **here in the Central**

Committee we have come to the conclusion that the Party Rules are outdated and do not correspond to the new conditions of the Party's work. The old one is the underground party, now the party is in power, etc." Vladimir Ilyich apparently agrees over the phone. "So," says Stalin, "thinking about this, **we** have developed a draft of a new party charter, which we want to propose." Lenin agrees and says that this question must be submitted to the next meeting of the Politburo.

The Politburo agreed in principle and referred the question to the Orgburo for preliminary development. On May 19, 1922, the Organizing Bureau set up a "Commission for the revision of the charter." Molotov was the chairman, it included Kaganovich and his deputies Lisitsyn and Okhlopkov, and I as secretary.

From that time on, for a year, I entered Molotov's orbit.

I had to fiddle with the charter for two months. The draft was sent to local organizations asking for their opinions, and in early August an All-Russian Party Conference was convened to adopt a new charter. The conference lasted three or four days. Molotov reported on the draft, the delegates spoke out. In the end, a final editorial commission was elected under the chairmanship of the same Molotov, which included Kaganovich and some

leaders of local organizations, such as, for example, Mikoyan (he was at that time the secretary of the South-Eastern Bureau of the Central Committee), and I, as a member and secretary of the commission. They edited it, and the conference finally approved the new charter (however, the Central Committee formally approved it even after that).

Throughout 1922, I lived in the same 5th House of the Central Committee - Loskutka. The employees of the Central Committee who lived in it were grouped according to personal acquaintances and work in circles. Entering this environment through a student at the Moscow Higher Technical School Sasha Volodarsky, I joined the circle, which was grouped not so much around the Volodarsky couple, but around three bosom friends - Lera Golubtsova, Marusya Ignatieva and Lida Volodarskaya. Lera and Marusya were, like Sasha Volodarsky, "informants" in the information sub-department of the Organizational Department, Lida was the secretary of this sub-department. The "informers" were, strictly speaking, not informants at all, but referents for one or two provincial party organizations. The informer received all the materials about the life of these organizations, compiled summaries and periodic reports for the authorities of the Organizational Department about everything important that happened in these organizations. Volodarsky and his wife were very sociable. Pilnyak visited them, and they were very proud of this acquaintance. To my deep surprise, I learned that the modest and quiet Sasha was during the civil war the secretary of the bloody Zemlyachka (Rosalia Samoilovna), when she, being in the party leadership of the 8th Army, was famous for executions and all sorts of cruelties. Besides me, Georgy Malenkov and German Tikhomirnov

also belonged to our circle. Georgy Malenkov was the husband of Lera (Valeria) Golubtsova. He was two years younger than me, but he tried to give himself the appearance of an old party member. In fact, he was in the party for only the second year (and he was only twenty years old). During the civil war, he was a little political worker at the front, and then, like me, went to study at the Higher Technical School. Having no secondary education, he was forced to start with a preparatory "working" faculty. He spent three years at the Higher Technical School. Then his clever wife, to whom he owed his career, in essence, dragged him into the apparatus of the Central Committee and pushed him along the same line that I had gone through - he became first secretary of the Orgburo, then after my departure - secretary of the Politburo. His wife, Lera, was much smarter than her husband. Georgy Malenkov himself gave the impression of a very average person, without any talents. He always

looked solemn and puffed up. True, he was still very young at that time. German Tikhomirnov was a year older than me. He was Molotov's second assistant. This is why it happened. When Molotov was still a fifteen-year-old high school student in Kazan, during the first semi-

revolution of 1905, he and his classmate Viktor Tikhomirnov (by the way, the son of very wealthy parents) together organized a very revolutionary committee of students in secondary educational institutions in Kazan. In the revolution of 1917 Viktor Tikhomirnov takes an active part together with Molotov. But even during the World War, he donates a very large amount of money to the party, which allowed the publication of Pravda, and Molotov was promoted to the secretary of the editorial office of Pravda, since the possibility of publishing came through him. True, in the spring of 1917, Molotov, who in the first weeks of the revolution had almost a leading role in the party - the leadership of its press organ - but whom the party did not at all consider as a political leader, did not stay here for long. Soon the members of the Central Committee Kamenev, Sverdlov and Stalin

arrived in St. Petersburg, then Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev, and Molotov was sent to the provinces. In 1919 he was authorized by the Central Committee in the Volga region, in 1920 in the Nizhny Novgorod provincial party committee and provincial executive committee, then in 1920-21

secretary of the Donetsk provincial committee. But from March 1921 he became a member of the Central Committee and secretary of the Central Committee. During the year he was the executive secretary of the Central Committee, although not general, but no longer technical, as were the secretaries before him, for example, Stasov. On April 3, 1922, Stalin replaced him as First Secretary of the Central Committee. Not much was enough to prevent Molotov from becoming the head of the party apparatus, which automatically went to power, or rather, Molotov did not remain. Zinoviev and Kamenev preferred Stalin to him, and in fact only on one basis - they needed an ardent enemy of Trotsky in this post. Stalin them and was.

Viktor Tikhomirnov becomes in 1917 a member of the NKVD collegium, is engaged in the main

way of punitive administrative work, and in 1919, sent to restore order in Kazan, he dies there, it seems, from typhus.

His younger brother, Herman, has been in the party since 1917. Until 1921, he was in the army, for some time at the KGB work - in special departments. From there, he left with some signs of abnormality, apparently, the KGB "work" was not so simple. Molotov, having come to the Central Committee, takes him to his secretariat, and he will work here for many years as Molotov's second assistant. With Molotov, he is on you through an old acquaintance. But Molotov keeps him in a black body, constantly poking and reprimanding him. He does not have a special mind. He is Molotov's personal secretary.

Vasilevsky, Molotov's first assistant, is much more responsible than he, a very smart and businesslike person. Herman considers himself a called Chekist. At first I wondered why he did not live in the 1st House of Soviets in accordance with his post, but continued to live in Loskutka. Then I understood. Molotov and Vasilevsky fish out of Loskutka, where ordinary employees of the Central Committee live, the personnel they need - people of a ceiling. Herman gets to know them, meets them in everyday life, studies them, "shines through" in the Chekist way and gives an opinion on whether they can be trusted or not. So, using her acquaintance with Herman, the smart Lera Golubtsova sent her Georgy up through the secretariat of the Orgburo (the Orgburo is the power of Molotov), and with considerable success.

After the story with the charter, they look at me. Until the end of the year, I am still working with Kaganovich and Molotov. Lazar Moiseevich

Kaganovich is remarkable in that he was one of two or three Jews who continued to remain in power throughout the Stalin era. Under Stalin's anti-Semitism, this was possible only thanks to Kaganovich's complete renunciation of all his relatives, friends and associates. It is known, for example, that when Stalin's Chekists raised the case of Kaganovich's brother, Mikhail Moiseevich, the Minister of Aviation Industry, before Stalin, and Stalin asked Lazar Kaganovich what he thought about it, then Lazar Kaganovich, who knew perfectly well that a pure murder was being prepared without the slightest grounds, replied that this was the case of the "investigating authorities" and did not concern him. Before his arrest, Mikhail Kaganovich shot himself. Lazar Kaganovich, rushing into the revolution, moved from place to place for the needs of revolutionary work from 1917. In Nizhny Novgorod, he met with

Molotov, who nominated him for the post of chairman of the Nizhny Novgorod Provincial Executive Committee, and this meeting determined his career. True, he was still wandering, visited Voronezh, Central Asia, and finally in the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions for trade union work. From here Molotov in 1922 took him to the head of the Organizational Department of the Central Committee, and here his rapid ascent began.

One circumstance played a significant role in this. In 1922, at a meeting of the Politburo, Lenin said, addressing the members of the Politburo:

"We, comrades, are fifty years old (he means himself and Trotsky), you, comrades, are forty years old (everyone else), we need to prepare a shift, thirty and twenty years old: select and gradually prepare for leadership work."

So far, at this point, they were limited to thirty-year-olds. They outlined two: Mikhailov and Kaganovich. Mikhailov was

at that time 28 years old, he was a candidate member of the Central Committee and secretary of the Moscow Party Committee; in 1923 he was elected a member of the Central Committee and even made secretary of the Central Committee. Alas, this did not last long. Very soon it became clear that Mikhailov was completely beyond the power of big affairs of state. He was gradually pushed back into smaller jobs. Then he was the head of the construction of the Dneproges. In 1937 he was shot along with others (he had the imprudence in 1929 to be for Bukharin). In general, this choice for "change" failed. Kaganovich was much more capable. Holding on at first

under Molotov, he gradually becomes, along with Molotov, one of the main Stalinists. Stalin transfers him from one most important place in the party apparatus to another. Secretary of the Central Committee of Ukraine, secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Soviet Union, member of the Politburo, first secretary of the Moscow Committee, again secretary of the Central Committee of the party, if necessary, Na

he fulfills all Stalin's instructions. If at first he had a conscience and other human qualities, then, in order to adapt to Stalin's requirements, all these qualities disappeared, and he became, like Molotov, a 100% Stalinist. Then he got used to everything, and millions of victims did not touch him. But it is characteristic that when, after Stalin's death, Khrushchev, who also adapted to everything during Stalin's lifetime, suddenly started up and condemned Stalinism, Kaganovich, Molotov and Malenkov no longer had any other regime than Stalin's (so that the nut was screwed firmly, to failure), they did not want to, rightly believing that under a regime of the Stalinist type one can sleep peacefully, and no danger threatens such a regime; at the same time, how Khrushchev's some liberalization may end for their calm leadership positions, and for the regime, is still unknown.

In the second half of 1922, I still continued to work in Kaganovich's department. Molotov and Kaganovich begin to appoint me secretary of various commissions of the Central Committee. As secretary of commissions, I am a godsend for both. I have the ability to articulate quickly and accurately. Kaganovich, lively and intelligent, quickly grasps everything, but does not speak the literary language. I am very valuable to him. But I am even more valuable in commissions for Molotov.

Molotov is not a brilliant person; he is an extremely hard-working bureaucrat, working non-stop from morning to night. He has to spend a lot of time at committee meetings. In commissions, in fact, agreements are reached soon, but then endless fuss begins with editing decisions. They try to formulate the point of the decision in this way - amendments and objections are pouring in; disputes flare up, they lose the beginning of their formulations and become completely confused. Unfortunately, Molotov, being well versed in the essence of things, with great difficulty looks for the necessary formulas.

Fortunately, I formulate with great ease. I quickly find the right line. As soon as I see that a solution has been found, I raise my hand. Molotov immediately stops the debate. "Listen." I pronounce the correct wording. Molotov grabs onto it: "Here, here, this is just what you need; write it down now, or else you will forget it." I reassure him - I will not forget. "Repeat one more time". I repeat. Here - the meeting is over, and how much time has been won. "You save me a lot of time, Comrade Bazhanov," Molotov says. Now he will put me as a secretary in all the countless commissions where he presides (the Central Committee works in commissions - on any important issue, after a preliminary discussion, a commission is created, which develops the issue and develops the final text of the decision, which is submitted for approval by the Orgburo or the Politburo). One of the most important commissions of the Central

Committee is the circular one. On all major issues, the Central Committee adopts a directive and sends it to local organizations - this is a circular of the Central Committee. The Circular Commission of the Central Committee creates the text of these circulars. Molotov sometimes presides. sometimes Kaganovich. I have already been firmly established as the secretary of this (permanent) commission. Whether the local party organizations should carry out a sowing campaign in the countryside, or a re-registration of the party and the introduction of a new party card, or a campaign to subscribe for a new loan, the directive

will go in the form of a circular. Soon I'm interested. Every day there are new circulars. Which of them remain valid, which are outdated, which have been changed, by the course of events or by new decisions, no one knows. And how do local organizations deal with this backlog of circulars? And how to find what you need among these thousands of circulars? I have no illusions about the organizational talents of local party bureaucrats. I end up taking the whole mass of circulars, throwing out what is outdated, changed or cancelled; and everything that represents a valid directive, I collect in a book, sorted by questions, topics, sections, times, and alphabetically. So that you can instantly find what you need by indexes. And I come to Kaganovich. Now he already expects only serious things from me. Not without some mischief, I find a term that captivates him. "Comrade Kaganovich, I propose to codify Party legislation." It sounds solemn. Kaganovich is intoxicated with the term. The whole machine starts up. Molotov is also extremely pleased. This gives a book of 400-500 pages. The book is called "Handbook of a party worker." The printing house of the Central Committee prints it. It will be republished every year. Molotov also appoints me secretary of the editorial board of Izvestia of the

Central Committee. This is a periodic

magazine, despite the consonance of names, has nothing to do with the daily newspaper "Izvestia of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee". Izvestia of the Central Committee is the organ of the party's internal life. The editor is Molotov, and since the editor is Molotov, the journal is an unusually dry and boring bureaucratic product. No party life is reflected in it. The journal is filled with directives and instructions from the Central Committee. My secretarial work is also completely bureaucratic. I begin to think about how I can get rid of this boring bureaucracy, when suddenly (suddenly for me, Molotov and others have been preparing for this for a long time) I receive a new important appointment. At the end of 1922 I was appointed secretary of the Orgburo.

Chapter 3

SECRETARY OF THE ORGBURO. SECRETARIAT OF THE CC. ORGBURO. BUDGET COMMISSION OF THE CC. PARTNERSHIP OF THE CCC AND "COORDINATION WITH THE CC". OFFICE OF THE ORGBURO, REORGANIZATION. MOLOTOV'S SECRETARIAT. THE ESSENCE OF THE GOING STRUGGLE FOR POWER. LENIN, TROTSKY. ILLNESS OF LENIN. "LENIN'S TESTAMENT". THE BEGINNING OF THE TROIKA. XII CONGRESS OF THE PARTY. SECRETARIAT OF LENIN. FOTIEVA AND GLASSER. STALIN POSTS HIS POLITBURO SECRETARIES. FAILURE. MY PURPOSE.

I'm starting to become a somewhat more important cog in the party state machine. I am drowning in my apparatus work, I am completely cut off from living life, I learn about what is happening in the country only through the prism of the party apparatus. Only in half a year will I begin to emerge from this paper sea; then, by the way, I will have all the information, and I will be able to compare facts, data, I will be able to judge, draw conclusions. come to conclusions; see what's really happening and where it's really going. In the meantime, I am taking an ever greater part in the work of the central party

apparatus. He keeps fewer and fewer secrets from me. What are the functions of the Secretary of the Organizing Bureau? I act as secretary

at meetings of the Orgburo and at meetings of the Secretariat of the Central Committee; in addition, at meetings of the meeting of the heads of departments of the Central Committee, which prepares materials for the meeting of the Secretariat of the Central Committee; in addition, at meetings of various commissions of the Central Committee. Finally, I command the secretariat (with a small letter) of the Orgburo, that is, the office. According to

the charter, the importance of the elected central organs of the party goes like this: the Secretariat (of 3 secretaries of the Central Committee), above it the Orgburo, above it the Politburo. The secretariat of the Central Committee is an organ in a state of rapid evolution and, perhaps, taking giant strides towards absolute power in the country, but not so much in itself as in the person of its general secretary.

In 1917 - 1918 - 1919 Stasova was the secretary of the Central Committee, purely technical, and Sverdlov commanded a rather rudimentary apparatus of the Central Committee. After his death (in March 1919) and until March 1921, Serebryakov and Krestinsky were semi-technical, semi-responsible secretaries. Since March 1921, Molotov became the secretary of the Central Committee (already having the title of "responsible"). But in April 1922, at the plenum of the Central Committee, three secretaries of the Central Committee were elected: "General Secretary" Stalin, 2nd Secretary Molotov and 3rd Secretary Mikhailov (soon replaced by Kuibyshev). Since that time, the Secretariat begins to sit.

Its functions are poorly defined by the charter. While it is known by the charter that the Politburo was created to resolve the most important (political) issues, and the Orgburo to resolve organizational issues, it is understood that the Secretariat should decide less important issues or prepare more important ones for the Orgburo and the Politburo. But, on the one hand, this is not written anywhere, and on the other hand, the charter cunningly states that "any decision of the Secretariat, if it is not protested by any of the members of the Orgburo, automatically becomes the decision of the Orgburo, and any decision of the Orgburo that is not protested by any of the members of the Orgburo members of the Politburo becomes the decision of the Politburo, that is, the decision of the Central Committee; Any member of the Central Committee may appeal against the decision of the Politburo before the Plenum of the Central Committee, but this does not suspend its implementation.

In other words, let's imagine that the Secretariat takes on some extremely important political issues. From the point of view of internal party democracy and

there is nothing to say in the statute about this. The secretariat does not usurp the rights of a higher authority - it can always change or cancel this decision. But if the general secretary of the Central Committee, as has happened since 1926, already holds all power in his hands, he can no longer hesitate to command through the Secretariat. In fact,

this did not happen. Until 1927-1928, the Politburo and its members still had enough weight so that the Secretariat did not try to do this, entering into an unnecessary conflict, and from 1929 the Politburo was so subordinate to Stalin that there was no need for him to try to rule otherwise than through Politburo. And a few years later, both the Politburo and the Secretariat turned into simple executors of his orders, and the one in power was not the one who held the largest post in the hierarchy, but the one who was closer to Stalin: his secretary weighed more in the apparatus than the chairman of the Council Ministers or any member of the Politburo. But now we are at the beginning of 1923. The

meetings of the Secretariat are chaired by the 3rd Secretary of the Central Committee, Rudzutak, who has already managed to replace Kuibyshev, who has taken over as Chairman of the Central Control Commission. Stalin and Molotov are present at the meeting - only the secretaries of the Central Committee have the right to a decisive vote. With the right of an advisory vote, all the heads of departments of the Central Committee are present - Kaganovich, Syrtsov, Smidovich (Zhenotdel) and others (there are many of them: the manager of the affairs of the Central Committee Ksenofontov, the head of the Financial Department Raskin, the head of the Statistics Department Smitten, then the new heads of the departments - Information, Press etc.), as well as the chief assistants to the secretaries of the Central Committee. Rudzutak presides well and intelligently. He is very nice to me. and feeds me

sweets - he quit smoking and instead of smoking he sucks sweets all the time. Molotov chairs meetings of the Organizing Bureau. The Orgburo includes three secretaries of the Central Committee, heads of the main departments of the Central Committee Kaganovich and Syrtsov, head of the PUR (Political Directorate of the Revolutionary Military Council; PUR has the rights of a Central Committee Department), and in

addition one or two members of the Central Committee, elected personally by the Orgburo, most often the secretary of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions and the first MC secretary. Stalin and Molotov are interested in the fact that the composition of the Orgburo was as narrow as possible - only their own people from the party apparatus. The fact is that the Orgburo performs work of tremendous importance for Stalin - it selects and distributes party workers: firstly, for all departments in general, which is relatively unimportant, and secondly, for all workers of the party apparatus - secretaries and chief workers of provincial, regional and regional party organizations, which is extremely important, since tomorrow it will provide Stalin with a majority at the party congress, and this is the main condition for gaining power. This work is proceeding at the most energetic pace; Surprisingly,

Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, floating in the clouds of high politics, do not pay much attention to this. The importance of this will be understood when it is too late. The first Orgburo was created in March 1919 after the VIII Party Congress. It included Stalin, Beloborodov, Serebryakov, Stasova, Krestinsky. As can be seen from its composition, it was supposed to deal with some organization of the technical apparatus of the party and some distribution of its forces. Since then, everything has changed. With the appointment of Stalin as general

secretary of the Orgburo, it becomes his main tool for selecting his people and thus capturing all party organizations in the field. Molotov and I are already old acquaintances. He is very pleased with me. As before, he puts me as a secretary in all commissions of the Central Committee. This provides my quick

For example, there is the Budget Commission of the Central Committee. This is a permanent commission. The chairman is Molotov, I am the secretary. It consists of two secretaries of the Central Committee - Stalin and Molotov (Stalin has never been at any meeting of the commission) and the head of the Financial Department of the Central Committee, Raskin. I am quickly convinced that both Raskin and I are present at the meetings of the commission, only to write down Molotov's decisions. Good thing Raskin doesn't have to talk much. He is a Russian Jew who emigrated from Russia as a child and visited so many countries. He speaks such Russian that it is very difficult to understand him. It seems to be the same in other languages. His department staff

they say: "Comrade Ruskin speaks all languages except his own."

On the one hand, the Budget Commission discusses and approves the estimates of the departments of the Central Committee. Here the heads of departments are present, trying to defend their interests, and Molotov argues with them (but, of course, he decides). On the other hand - and here we are talking about huge sums - the Budget Commission approves the budgets of all fraternal foreign Communist Parties. Not a single representative of the fraternal Communist Party is ever allowed to attend meetings. Only Pyatnitsky, General Secretary of the Comintern, reports. Molotov distributes manna unquestioningly and categorically - the considerations by which he is guided are not always clear to me. Raskin kindly explains to me the financial technique of maintaining the fraternal communist parties - the hidden transfer of funds is ensured by the monopoly of foreign trade.

I also quickly become enlightened about the work of the organ of "Party conscience" - the Party

Collegium of the Central Control Commission. There is order in the country - the entire population has no rights and is entirely in the clutches of the GPU. A non-Party citizen can be arrested at any moment, exiled, sentenced to many years in prison, or shot simply by the verdict of some anonymous "troika" of the GPU. But in 1923 the GPU cannot yet arrest a member of the party (this will come only in eight to ten years). If a Party member steals, commits a murder, or commits some kind of violation of Party laws, he must first be judged by the local KK (Control Commission), and for more prominent members of the Party, by the Central Control Commission, or rather, the Party Collegium of the Central Control Commission, that is, several members of the Central Control Commission. allocated for this task. Only a communist expelled from the party by the Party Collegium falls into the hands of the court or into the clutches of the GPU. Communists tremble before the Party Collegium. One of the biggest

threats: "to transfer the case about you to the Central Control Commission." At the meetings of the party collegium, a number of old comedians like Solts create justice and reprisals, rattling off phrases about the high morality of party members, and pretend to be the "conscience of the party." In fact, there are two orders: one, when it comes to petty fry and purely criminal cases (for example, a party member simply and rudely steals), and then Solts does not even need to play comedy especially. Another order is when it comes to bigger members of the party. Here there already exists an unknown information apparatus of the GPU; he acts cautiously, with the help and participation of members of the board of the GPU Peters, Latsis and Mantsev, who, for the needs of the case, are included in the number of members of the Central Control Commission. If the case is about a member of the party - an oppositionist or some opponent of the Stalinist group, invisible and underground information of the GPU - true or specially invented to compromise a person - comes through the manager of the Central Committee, Ksenofontov (an old Chekist and former member of the collegium of the Cheka) and his deputy Brizanovskiy (also a security officer) to Stalin's secretariat, to his assistants Kanner and Tovstukha. Then, just as secretly, there is an instruction to the Party Collegium what to do, "expel from the Party" or "remove from responsible work", or "give a severe reprimand with a warning", etc. It is up to the Party Collegium to come up with and substantiate a plausible accusation. It's not at all difficult to rattle phrases about party morality, and find fault with any trifle - for example, a party member wrote an article in a magazine, received 30 rubles in fees in excess of the party maximum - Solts plays such a hysteria about this that your Art Theater. In a word, having received a directive from Kanner, Soltz or Yaroslavsky will play the fool, be indignant at how this communist dared to violate the purity of party robes, and pass the verdict that they received from Kanner (we will talk about Kanner and Stalin's secretariat later). But there is a clause in the statutes:

the decisions of the control commissions must be coordinated with the corresponding party committees; decisions of the Central Control Commission - with the Central Committee of the Party. This technique corresponds to this.

When the meeting of the Organizing Bureau is over and its members disperse, Molotov and I remain. Molotov looks through the protocols of the Central Control Commission. There goes a long series of decisions about cases. Let's say the paragraph: "The case of Comrade Ivanov on such and such charges." Decided: T. Ivanov to be expelled from the party" or "Forbid Comrade Ivanov to conduct responsible work for three years." Molotov, who is aware of all the directives that are given to the party collegium, puts a birdie. I write down in the minutes of the Organizing Bureau: "To agree with the decisions of the Central Control Commission in the case of Comrades. Ivanov (protocol of the Central Control Commission d

Molotov does not agree: the Central Control Commission decided to "declare a severe reprimand." Molotov crosses out and writes: "Expel from the party." I write in the minutes of the Organizing Bureau: "In the case of Comrade Ivanov, to propose to the Central Control Commission to review its decision from such and such a date after such and such a point." Soltz, having received the protocol, will call me and ask: "What is the solution?" I'll tell him by phone what Molotov wrote on their protocol. And in the next minutes of the Central Control Commission it will be said: "Having reconsidered its decision on such and such a date and taking into account the importance of the charges brought, the Party Collegium of the Central Control Commission decides: comrade Ivanov should be excluded

from the party." It is clear that the Orgburo (that is, Molotov) will agree with this decision. My Office of the Organizing Bureau consists of a dozen employees, extremely tested and devoted. All the work of the Orgburo is considered secret (the Politburo is extremely secret). Therefore, in order for the secrets to be known to as few people as possible, the states are minimal. This corresponds to a strong congestion of employees with work - they practically do not have a personal life: they start working at 8 o'clock in the morning, eat hastily right there and somehow, finish work at one in the morning. At the same time, they still do not cope with the work - in the paper sea in which the Orgburo is sinking, complete confusion, nothing can be found, papers are registered according to some antediluvian methods of incoming and outgoing; when the secretary of the Central Committee needs some information or a document from the archive, many hours of searching in the ocean of archives b

I see that this organization is worth nothing. I break it all down, start several filing cabinets with a record of each document in three different alphabetical indexes. Gradually everything falls into place.

After 2-3 months, the paper or certificate required by the secretary of the Central Committee is delivered to him no later than one minute later, the departments of the Central Committee, who previously considered it hopeless to contact the secretariat of the Organizing Bureau, will not be surprised at the speed with which everything happens at once. Molotov is extremely pleased and will not boast of me. But, without knowing it, he is preparing my loss: even worse confusion reigns in the secretariat of the Politburo, and Stalin begins to think that it would be nice if I put things in order there; but this matter is not so simple—we shall see that later. The consequences for the staff

of my office are completely unexpected. At first they all vigorously protest against my reforms and complain to the secretaries of the Central Committee that it is impossible to work with me. When, nevertheless, with a firm hand, I carry out all the reforms and the results are obvious, the protests, in fact, fall silent. But before, the whole day of their work was wasted - in a long and fruitless search. Now all work is done quickly and accurately. And it turns out to be much less. Now employees come at 9 o'clock, and at 5-6 o'clock it's all over. Now they have free time and can have a personal life. Are they satisfied? Vice versa. Previously, they had in their own eyes the halo of martyrs, ideological people who sacrifice themselves for the party. Now they are clerical workers in a well-functioning apparatus, and nothing more. I feel that they are all full of disappointment. I work in constant contact with Molotov's secretaries, and already, to some extent,

contact with Stalin's secretaries.

Molotov's secretariat is headed by his first secretary Vasilyevsky. This is a fast and energetic person, smart and businesslike. Thin, thin smart face. He organizes all the work of Molotov, quickly and intelligently understands all matters. With Molotov, he is on you and enjoys his complete confidence. I can't figure out his past. It seems that he is a former officer of the tsarist time (approximately a lieutenant). Immediately after the October Revolution, he was the (Bolshevik) chief of staff of the Moscow Military District. When I left the Central Committee in 1926, I lost track of him, and then I never heard anything about him. Molotov's second assistant is German Tikhomirnov. He is, in fact, a personal secretary. He does not invent

gunpowder, and more than once I am surprised how Molotov manages such a personal secretary. But the third and fourth assistants of Molotov - Borodaevsky and Belov - are no better. Herman and Molotov are also on you. Molotov is not enthusiastic about his work, but he tolerates it. In two or three years, he will appoint Tikhomirnov to head the Central Party Archive under the Central Committee of the Party, but in terms of harmless papers, since all the most important documents are kept by the Stalinist secretariat and the Stalinist secretary Tovstukha.

Working with the Molotov secretariat, I am more and more aware of the affairs of the party elite. I

I begin to understand the hidden essence of the ongoing struggle for power.

After the revolution and during the civil war, the cooperation between Lenin and Trotsky was excellent. By the end of the civil war (late 1920), the country and the party consider Lenin and Trotsky the leaders of the revolution, far ahead of all other party leaders. As a matter of fact, Lenin led the war all the time. The country and the party do not know this well and are inclined to attribute the victory mainly to Trotsky, the organizer and head of the Red Army. This aura of Trotsky does not suit Lenin much - he foresees an important and dangerous turn in the transition to peaceful construction. In order to retain leadership at the same time, he must retain a majority in the central leading organs of the Party, in the Central Committee. Meanwhile, both before the revolution and in 1917, Lenin and his party, created by him, many times had to be in the minority and again win the majority with great difficulty. And after the revolution, this was repeated - to recall, for example, how he suffered a defeat in the Central Committee and remained in the minority on such a primary importance issue as the question of the Brest-Litovsk peace with Germany. Lenin wants to secure himself, to guarantee himself a majority. He sees a possible threat to his leadership only from Trotsky. At the end of 1920, in a discussion about trade unions, he tries to weaken Trotsky's position and reduce his influence. Lenin further intensifies his game, putting Trotsky in a

stupid position in the transport story. It is necessary to hastily raise the collapsed railways. Lenin knows perfectly well that Trotsky is completely unsuited for this work, and he has no objective possibilities to do it. Trotsky is appointed People's Commissar of Railways. He brings enthusiasm, pathos, eloquence, his skills as a tribune into this business. It does nothing but confusion. And Trotsky leaves, with a sense of failure. In the Central Committee, Lenin organizes a group of his closest assistants - from the opponents of Trotsky. Trotsky's most ardent enemies are Zinoviev and Stalin. Zinoviev became an enemy of Trotsky after the autumn of 1919, when Yudenich's successful offensive against Petrograd took place. Zinoviev was in complete panic and completely lost the ability to lead anything; Trotsky arrived, rectified the situation, treated Zinoviev with contempt - here they became enemies. Stalin hates Trotsky no less. Throughout the Civil War, Stalin

was a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of various armies and fronts and was subordinate to Trotsky. Trotsky demanded discipline, the execution of orders, the use of military specialists. Stalin relied on the local undisciplined freemen, all the time did not follow the orders of the military center, did not tolerate Trotsky as a Jew. Lenin always had to be the arbiter, and Trotsky sharply attacked Stalin. Kamenev, who had no personal reasons to dislike Trotsky, was less ambitious and less prone to intrigues, joined Zinoviev and followed him. Lenin raised the entire group high. Not to mention the fact that Zinoviev was put at the head of the Comintern (then Trotsky accepted this calmly, he was in the most important post at the head of the army during the civil war), and Lenin made Kamenev his first and main assistant in the Council of People's Commissars and in fact entrusted him with the supreme leadership of the country's economy (Council of Labor and Defense), but when, at the April plenum of the Central Committee of 1922, on the idea of Zinoviev, Kamenev proposed appointing Stalin General Secretary of the Central Committee, Lenin did not mind, although he knew Stalin well. So in March-April 1922,

this group, without leaving obedience to Lenin, provided him with a majority, and Trotsky ceased to be dangerous. But on May 25, 1922, an unexpected event occurred that changed everything - Lenin's first blow. Lenin has been ill more than once in recent years - in August 1918 he was wounded (the assassination of Fanny Kaplan), in March 1920 he was very ill, from the end of 1921 until the end of March 1922 he was ill and retired. But then he recovered, on March 27, 1922, he made a political report of the Central Committee at the congress, and kept everything in his hands. The blow on May 25 confused all the cards. And until October 1922, Lenin was practically out of work, and the conclusion of the doctors (of course, secret, for members of the Politburo, and not for the country) was that this was the beginning of the end. Already after the blow, Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin organized a "troika". They see Trotsky as their main rival. But they are not yet undertaking a struggle against him, because, contrary to expectations, in June Lenin began to recover, recovered more and more, and from the beginning of October he returned to work. He also performed

On October 20, at the plenum of the Moscow Soviet, he also made a report on November 3 at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern. During this return, he again took everything into his hands, smashed Stalin about national policy (Stalin, pursuing a policy more centralist than Russification, planned the creation of **the Russian** Socialist Soviet Republic in the draft constitution being prepared; Lenin demanded that it be the Union of Socialist **Sov** . Republics, foreseeing the possibility of other countries joining as the revolution progresses in the East and West). Also, Lenin was going to smash Stalin about his conflict (and his associates Ordzhonikidze and Dzerzhinsky) with the Central Committee of Georgia, but did not have time. In October 1922, the plenum of the Central Committee, without Lenin, adopted decisions that weakened the monopoly of foreign trade. In December, when Lenin returned, at a new plenum, these October decisions were canceled. It seemed that Lenin again held everything in his hands, and the "troika" again returned to the role of his close assistants and performers.

But the doctors were right: the improvement was short-lived. Untreated at the time, syphilis was in the last stage. The end was approaching, on December 16, Lenin's situation worsened again, and even more so on December 23. Already in

early December, Lenin knew that he did not have long to live. From this, worries about the majority in the Central Committee and about the rivalry with Trotsky evaporated. In addition, Lenin was struck by how, in the course of a few months of his illness, the power of the party apparatus, and, consequently, of Stalin, rapidly increased. Lenin took a step closer to Trotsky and began to seriously consider how to limit the growing power of Stalin. Reflecting on this, Lenin came up with a number of measures, primarily organizational ones. He could no longer write articles, but had to dictate them to his secretaries. First of all, Lenin came to a double measure - on the one hand, to significantly expand the composition of the Central Committee, diluting, so to speak, the power of the apparatus; on the other hand, to reorganize and significantly expand the Central Control Commission, making it a counterbalance to the bureaucratic apparatus of the party.

On December 23 and 26, he dictated the first "letter to the congress" (he meant the XII Party Congress, which was to take place in March-April 1923, which dealt with the expansion of the Central Committee. This letter was sent to the Central Committee to Stalin. Stalin hid, and at the congress that took place in April, taking advantage of the fact that at that time Lenin was already completely out of order, he passed off this proposal as his own (but supposedly in agreement with Lenin's thoughts); the proposed increase was accepted, the number of members of the Central Committee was increased from 27 to 40. But Stalin did this with a goal contrary to Lenin's thought, namely, to increase the number of **his** chosen members of the Central Committee and thereby increase

his majority in the Central Committee. On December 24 and 25, Lenin dictated the second "letter to the congress". what is usually called "Lenin's testament" In it he gave characteristics to prominent party leaders, raising the question of leadership of the party in the event of his death, and in general leaned towards collegiate leadership, but still nominated Trotsky in the first place. This letter was addressed in essence to the same next congress (it was supposed to be the XII congress, in April 1923), but Lenin ordered it to be sealed and indicated that it should be opened only after his death. The secretary on duty, however, did not put the words about his death on the envelope, but she told Krupskaya and other secretaries about all this. And Krupskaya, bound by this order, did not open the envelope for the XII Congress - Lenin was still alive.

Meanwhile, Lenin, continuing to think about these questions, a few days later came to the conclusion that Stalin must be removed from the post of General Secretary. On January 4 or 5, 1923, he made a well-known postscript to the "testament" about this, in which, speaking of Stalin's rudeness and other shortcomings, he advised the party to remove him from the post of General Secretary. This postscript was attached to the "letter to the congress", sealed, and also Krupskaya was not opened before the Twelfth Congress. But the contents of the "testament" of Lenin's secretary were known and Krupskaya

was told. Finally, Lenin outlined the second part of his plan in an article dictated by him, "How We Can Reorganize the Rabkrin." He dictated it before the beginning, March. This article went to the Central Committee normally; The Rabkrin was reorganized in June formally according to Lenin's project, but, in fact, again for Stalin's purposes.

In February-March, Lenin's condition was stationary. At this time, Lenin came to

the final decision to fight both Stalin and the bureaucracy he headed. At the insistence of Lenin, at the end of February, a Central Committee commission against bureaucracy was created (Lenin has in mind, first of all, the bureaucracy of the Orgburo, Lenin hopes that at the upcoming congress he will lead the struggle against Stalin, albeit from his sick room). Meanwhile, Stalin, after the second deterioration in Lenin's health in mid-

December (doctors believed that this was, in fact, a second blow), decided that Lenin could no longer be taken into account especially. He became rude to Krupskaya, who addressed him on behalf of Lenin. In January 1923, Lenin's secretary Fotieva asked him for materials that interested Lenin on the Georgian question. Stalin refused to give them ("I can't live without the Politburo"). In early March, he scolded Krupskaya so much that she ran to Lenin in tears, and the indignant Lenin dictated a letter to Stalin that he broke off all personal relations with him. But at the same time, Lenin was very worried, and on March 6 he suffered a third stroke, after which he lost his speechlessness, was paralyzed, and his consciousness almost died out. He was no longer on the political stage, and the next 10 months were a gradual dying.

(Everything that is written above, I know at the beginning of 1923 second-hand - from Molotov's secretaries; in a few months I will receive verification and confirmation of all this already first-hand - from Stalin's secretaries and Lenin's secretaries.) From January 1923, the troika begins exercise power. The first two months, still fearing Trotsky's bloc with the dying Lenin, but after the March blow Lenin was no more, and the troika could begin preparations for the struggle to remove Trotsky. But until the summer, the troika only tried to strengthen its

positions.

The party congress took place on April 17-25, 1923. The capital question was who would make the political report of the Central Committee at the congress - the most important political document of the year. Lenin always did it. Whoever makes it will be considered by the party as Lenin's heir. At the

Politburo, Stalin offered to read it to Trotsky. It was in the manner of Stalin. He carried on an energetic underhand work of distributing his people, but this would give him a majority at the congress only in two years. For the time being, it is necessary to gain time and lull Trotsky's attention.

Trotsky refuses with surprising naivety: he does not want the party to think that he is usurping the place of the sick Lenin. He, in turn, proposes that the report be read by General Secretary Stalin. I imagine the state of mind of Zinoviev at this moment, but Stalin also refuses - he perfectly takes into account that the party will not understand and will not accept this - no one considers Stalin the leader of the party. In the end, not without the good offices of Kamenev, Zinoviev was entrusted with reading the political report - he is the chairman of the Comintern, and if someone needs to temporarily replace Lenin on the occasion of his illness, then it is most convenient for him. In April, at the congress, Zinoviev makes a political report. In May and June, the troika continues to

strengthen its position. The party considers Zinoviev not so much a leader as number one. Kamenev is number two, and actually replaces Lenin as chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and chairman of the SRT. He also presides over meetings of the Politburo. Stalin is number three, but his main work is underground, the preparation of tomorrow's majority. Kamenev and Zinoviev do not think about this work - their first concern is how to politically discredit and remove Trotsky from power.

Lenin is out of order, but his secretariat continues to work by inertia. Actually, Lenin has two secretaries - Glyasser and Fotieva. Of the rest of the close collaborators, recently Volodichev's illness and Sarah Flaxerman performed the duties of "duty secretaries" with them, that is, they were on duty so that at any moment they could be at Lenin's disposal if he wanted to dictate any letter, order or article. Sarah Flaxerman moves to the Small Council of People's Commissars (this is a kind of commission that gives the necessary legal form to the draft decrees of the Council of People's Commissars), becoming its secretary. Fotieva, who holds the official position of secretary of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, continues to work with Kamenev. She tells Kamenev enough petty secrets of Lenin's secretariat to keep her post. However, Kamenev is not Stalin, and he is not very interested in the little things of Lenin's life. But of the two secretaries of Lenin, the main and main one is Maria Ignatievna Glasser. She

Lenin's secretary for the Politburo, Lidia Fotieva - secretary for the Council of People's Commissars. All of Russia knows the name of Fotieva - for many years she signed with Lenin all the decrees of the government. No one knows the name of Glyasser - the work of the Politburo is top secret. Meanwhile, everything basic and most important takes place at the Politburo, and all the most important decisions and resolutions are written down at meetings of the Politburo by Glasser; The Council of People's Commissars then only "formulates it in the Soviet order," and Fotieva only has to make sure that the decrees of the Council of People's Commissars repeat exactly the decisions of the Politburo, but does not take the same part in their preparation and formulation as Glasser does. Glasser secretaries at all meetings of the Politburo, plenums of the Central Committee

and the most important commissions of the Politburo. This is a little hunchback with a smart and unkind face. She is a good secretary, a very smart woman; she herself, of course, does not formulate anything, but she understands well everything that happens in the debates of the Politburo, what Lenin dictates, and writes down accurately and quickly. She preserves the Leninist spirit and, knowing Lenin's hostility of the last months of his life to the bureaucratic Stalinist apparatus, makes no attempt to go over to his service. Stalin decides that it is time to remove her and replace her with his own man - the post of secretary of the Politburo is too important - all the secrets of the party and power converge in it. At the end of June 1923, Stalin received the consent of Zinoviev and Kamenev and removed Glyasser from the post of secretary of the Politburo. But it's not easy to find a replacement. The job

of the Secretary of the Politburo requires many qualities. As a secretary at meetings, he not only must perfectly understand the essence of all debates and everything that happens in the Politburo; at the same time, he must: 1) closely follow the debate, 2) ensure that all members of the Politburo are provided with all the necessary materials in time, 3) manage the flow of nobles called on each item on the agenda, 4) intervene in the debate whenever something happens some mistake, it is forgotten that something else had already been decided on the issue, 5) doing all this, have time to write down decisions, 6) be the memory of the Politburo, instantly giving all the necessary information.

Glasser handled it all. Stalin tries to replace her with two of his secretaries

- Nazarene and Tovstukha, hoping that together, sharing the work, they will be able to do it.

Alas, it ends in complete failure. Nazaretyan and Tovstukha cannot focus their attention on all tasks, they do not have time, they get confused, they do not grasp, they do not understand; the work of the Politburo is clearly upset. Members of the Politburo see that this is a failure, but they are still silent. Finally, Trotsky explodes. The reason is the discussion of the note of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs to the British government. The draft note was drawn up by Trotsky, while being discussed at the Politburo, some amendments are made. Secretaries, not grasping their essence, do not make the necessary changes. After the meeting, you have to go around the members of the Politburo, correct, agree on the text, and so on. Further.

Trotsky writes at the next meeting of the Politburo (I still have this piece of paper - Nazaretyan handed it to me):

*"Only members of the Politburo . T. Litvinov says that the secretaries of the meeting *did not write down anything* on the question of the note. It doesn't fit. It is necessary to ensure a more correct order in the future. The secretaries had to have before their eyes the text of the note (I sent it) and mark it. Otherwise, misunderstandings may arise. Trotsky".*

Zinoviev writes on a piece of paper:

"It is necessary. stenographer GZ"

Bukharin:

"I join N. Bukh."

Stalin, extremely dissatisfied with the failure, with his usual rudeness and dishonesty, writes:

"Nonsense . The secretaries would have taken notes if Trotsky and Chicherin had not taken notes themselves. On the contrary, it is expedient that in the types of conspiracy on *such* issues there should be no separate records of secretaries by I. St. "

Tomsk:

"Stenographer is not needed M. Tom."

Kamenev:

"Stenographer (communist, verified, to help secretaries of the meeting) - L Kam is needed"

(what is highlighted in the texts is emphasized by Trotsky and Stalin themselves).

Why do I write that Stalin is clearly dishonest? He emphasizes "on such matters," as if the question of the note under discussion was extraordinarily secret. Meanwhile, this is the usual practice of the Politburo, the vast majority of issues are just as secret or even more secret; highlighting issues on which the secretaries of the Politburo cannot be trusted in their notes is simply stupid and impossible. By the way, Trotsky writes "only to members of the Politburo" to show that he does not take into account the opinion of a member of the Politburo at all. Stalin gives this piece of paper to Nazaretyan, to whom it just should not be shown. Stalin still has to retreat. How good it would

be for him to have his own people, Nazaretyan and Tovstukha, as secretaries of the Politburo. Alas, it doesn't work. There is Bazhanov, who does an excellent job of secretary of the Orgburo and will probably do well as secretary of the Politburo, but will he be his own person? This is a question. You have to take a risk. On August 9, 1923, the Organizing Bureau of the Central Committee decides: "To appoint Comrade Stalin,

Comrade Bazhanov, assistant secretary of the Central Committee, with his release from the duties of secretary of the Orgburo." In the resolution, Stalin says nothing about my work as secretary of the Politburo. It's thoughtful. I am appointed as his assistant. And the appointment of the Secretary of the Politburo is his prerogative - he will appoint his assistant to this post or whomever he finds necessary (later - Malenkov, who will not soon be his assistant).

Chapter 4. Stalin's Assistant - Secretary of the Politburo

APPROVAL OF THE POLITBURO AGENDA. THE MECHANISM OF THE POWER OF THE TROIKA. THE TECHNICAL APPARATUS OF THE POLITBURO. COVEL DEPARTMENT OF THE GPU. TOP SECRET. TAMARA KHAZANOVA. STALIN'S SECRETARIAT. NAZARETH. DISTRIBUTION OF WORK. KANNER. 1ST HOUSE OF SOVIETS 5TH FLOOR OF THE HOUSE OF THE CC PARTY. STARTING WORK WITH STALIN. "Spinner". T. STALIN "LISTENS". REPAIR OF THE CAVALRY AND 7 MILLION DOLLARS. MEETINGS OF THE POLITBURO.

Nazaretyan, handing over the files of the Politburo secretariat to me, tells me: "Comrade Bazhanov, you have no idea how important your post is now." Indeed, I will see this only in two days, when for the first time I will report on the draft agenda for the next meeting of the Politburo. The Politburo is the central authority. It solves all

the most important issues of governing the country (and the world revolution). It meets 2-3 times a week. On the agenda of its regular meetings there are a good hundred issues, sometimes up to 150 (there are also extraordinary meetings on certain urgent issues). All departments and central institutions that put their questions on the decision of the Politburo send them to me, to the secretariat of the Politburo. I study them and draw up a draft agenda for the next meeting of the Politburo. But I am not the one who approves the order of the day for the Politburo meeting. It is approved by the trio. Here I am suddenly

I reveal the true mechanism of the power of the troika.

On the eve of the meeting of the Politburo, Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin gather, at first more often at Zinoviev's apartment, then usually in Stalin's office in the Central Committee. Officially - to approve the agenda of the Politburo. No charter or regulation provides for the issue of approving the agenda. I can affirm it, Stalin can affirm it. But it is approved by the troika, and this meeting of the troika is the real meeting of the secret government, which decides, or rather, predetermines all the main questions. There were only four people at the meeting - a troika and me. I report briefly every question that is proposed for the agenda of the Politburo, I report the essence and features. Formally, the troika decides whether to raise the issue at a meeting of the Politburo or to give it another direction. In fact, the members of the troika are agreeing on how this issue should be resolved at tomorrow's meeting of the Politburo, are considering a decision, and even distributing roles among themselves when discussing the issue at tomorrow's meeting.

I am not writing down any decisions, but everything is essentially a foregone conclusion here. Tomorrow at the meeting of the Politburo there will be a discussion, decisions will be made, but everything important is discussed here, in a close circle; discussed frankly, among themselves (there is nothing to be ashamed of each other) and between the true holders of power. Actually, this is the real government, and my role as the first speaker on all issues and the inevitable confidant in all secrets and behind-the-scenes decisions is much more than a simple secretary of the Politburo. Now I grasp the meaning of Nazarethian's remark.

True, nothing lasts forever under the moon, and the troika is not eternal either; but two more years this mechanism authorities will act perfectly.

My troika report on each issue should be quick, clear, concise and precise. I see that the trio is satisfied with me.

The secretariat of the Politburo is subordinate to me. He, like the secretariat of the Organizing Bureau, consists of a dozen dedicated, selected and proven party members. They also work from early morning until late at night. The confusion and chaos here is even greater than in the Orgburo - there are much more paper mountains piled up in an incomprehensible order. It is rare to find any paper or certificate. And if it does, it's for a special reason. One of the employees, Lyuda Kuryndina, is a tall and large girl with an amazing and hard to explain memory. We must urgently find the report sent by the Supreme Council of the National Economy a month or two ago on the question of price policy. Where can he be? It's just impossible to find it. Kuryndina plunges into a clairvoyant session and finally remembers that, it seems, she saw him in one of the folders over there in that corner (a huge archive). Look through all these folders, and sometimes the report is really found.

I am starting the same reorganization with the help of file cabinets and indexes, as in the Organizing Bureau. But here it is accepted by the staff better - the secretariat of the Organizing Bureau is located nearby on the same floor, and the miraculous results of the reform have long been known here. After 2-3 months, everything returns to normal, any paper is instantly. The secretaries of the Central Committee and heads of departments, who previously considered it completely hopeless to turn to the abysses of the Politburo, now not only turn and immediately receive the necessary information, but begin to set us as an example to their subordinates: "Why are you in such a mess? Why can't you find anything? Look, the secretariat of the Politburo has dozens of times more papers than you have, and the necessary information is always available instantly.

Three months later, the staff, as well as in the secretariat of the Organizing Bureau, comes to normal work: everything ends not at one in the morning, but at 5-6 in the afternoon. But there is no disappointment here. Here, the staff cannot consider themselves simple clerks. He knows that all state secrets pass through his hands all day, he is proud of this, and always and in any case considers himself to be especially trusted personnel. Since all the materials

handled by my secretariat are "specially" and "top secret", there is a special courier corps of the GPU for sending them out and collecting them back. These are selected, drilled and trained Chekists, well-armed, dressed from head to toe in all leather. With the material or protocol of the Politburo in a sealed envelope, they penetrate through all secretarial barriers to the addressee - a member of the Central Committee or the People's Commissar: "To comrade such and such, urgently, top secret, in

own hands, with a receipt on the envelope. If the envelope is addressed to, say, Trotsky, they will penetrate Trotsky's office, they will not give it to anyone on the way, they will hand the envelope to Trotsky in his hands and only in his hands, they will stand nearby while Trotsky opens it, and will not leave until Trotsky will not sign the envelope and will not give them the envelope with the receipt. They are trained in such a way that they are responsible for the envelope entrusted to them with their heads, and you can take the envelope from them only by stepping over their corpse. The Secretariat of the Politburo, where I work, is located on the 5th floor of the Central Committee building on Staraya Ploshchad. The meetings of the Politburo take place in the Kremlin in the meeting room of the Council of People's Commissars. To the Kremlin, my assistants and I are transporting precious cargo in a big car - Politburo materials, the latest protocols. Two armed security officers from the courier corps accompany us in our car. They always have tense faces - they are inspired that there is no more secret than these materials and that they must be

protected to the last drop of blood. Of course, no one has ever attacked us. After reading the protocol, extract or material of the Politburo, the addressee - a member of the Central Committee (who does not have the right to copy the protocol or extract) by the same courier corps sends what has been read to the secretariat of the Politburo, where an inventory is kept, acts of distribution and receipt

are drawn up, and then the destruction of materials (in addition, what remains for the archive). This, as well as the reproduction of materials, the

printing of protocols and extracts, archives and all other equipment, is handled by my employees. Among the employees there is a very beautiful girl, Georgian Tamara Khazanova, with large, very beautiful black eyes. I haven't had any real big romance yet. I refrain from this novel in time - Tamara is as stupid as she is beautiful. In a few years, she will become a great friend of Stalin's wife, Nadia Alliluyeva, but a friend not on an equal footing, like, for example, Molotov's wife, Zhemchuzhina, but in such a way that Tamara will adore Nadia like a college student and follow her on her heels. She will visit Nadia all the time and take care of her children. When Nadia commits suicide and the children remain in the care of the servants, Tamara will continue to take care of them. It seems that at this time, for a short while, she will enjoy, so to speak, the special disposition of Stalin. But she is stupid, and Stalin will not be able to endure her for long. Occupying the position of secretary of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, she eventually captures Politburo member Andreev

Now I am entering Stalin's secretariat. This institution will have a great history. Now it is nominally headed by Nazaretyan. But he will immediately go on vacation, which will be continued due to illness. He will return at the end of the year for a very short time, will be sent by Stalin to Pravda with special assignments (I will tell about this later - this is a high-profile story) and will not return to the Central Committee

apparatus. Hmayak Nazaretyan is an Armenian, very cultured, smart, gentle and reserved. At one time he conducted party work with Stalin in the Caucasus. With Stalin, you now have only three people: Voroshilov, Ordzhonikidze and Nazaretyan. All three of them call Stalin "Koba" after his old party nickname. I have the impression that the fact that his secretary says "you" to him, Stalin begins to embarrass. He is already aiming for the all-Russian autocrats, and this detail is unpleasant for him. At the end of the year, he gets rid of the Nazarene in a not-so-elegant way. It seems that their personal relationship will be interrupted by this. Nazaretyan will leave for the Urals as chairman of the regional control commission, then he will return to Moscow and will work in the apparatus of the Central Control Commission and the Soviet control commission, but he will no longer approach Stalin. In 1937, Stalin would shoot him.

Another assistant to Stalin, Ivan Pavlovich Tovstukha, on the contrary, until his death (in 1935) will play an important role in the Stalinist secretariat and under Stalin. But now, in the coming months, he will be in the secretariat a little - he is carrying out a special assignment from Stalin - organizing the "Lenin Institute". Three assistants to Stalin are now permanently working in the secretariat: myself, Mekhlis and Kanner. When we define areas of our work in our conversations, we do it this way: "Bazhanov is Stalin's secretary for the Politburo; Mekhlis - Stalin's personal secretary; Grisha Kanner - Stalin's secretary for dark affairs; Tovstukha is the secretary for semi-dark ones. This needs some explanation. Everything

about me and Mekhlis is relatively clear. Nothing dark in

our work is not. In particular, everything that is addressed to and comes to the Politburo is received by me. Everything that comes in the name of Stalin personally receives the Mekhlis and reports to Stalin. I, so to speak, serve the Politburo, Mekhlis serves Stalin. Grisha Kanner officially has vaguely domestic functions. He deals with security, apartments, cars, vacations, the medical commission of the Central Committee, the cell of the Central Committee, at first glance, all sorts of little things. But this is the surface part of his work. Underwater - one can only guess about it.

I am figuring out the main line of Grisha Kanner's work very soon. Manages the affairs of the Central Committee of the old security officer, a former member of the Board of the Cheka Ksenofontov. He and his deputy Brizanovsky, also a

Chekist, work on the instructions and orders of Grisha. As soon as I am appointed secretary of the Politburo, Grisha Kanner (one of Stalin's assistants) and Ksenofontov declare that I need to move to the Kremlin, or at least to the 1st House of Soviets. "Loskutka" (Patchwork Hotel), where I live, is a real passage yard. Anyone who wants to enter. Now the task of protecting my precious person lies with the "security agencies". This is easy to do in the Kremlin, where people enter only after completing a series of formalities and under strict control. There is also a commandant's office in the 1st House of Soviets, and anyone who wants to go to you must call you from the commandant's office and get a pass, and upon leaving, present it to the commandant's office with your mark. Another argument sounds quite serious that I can take other urgent work home, and these are all extremely secret documents of the Politburo. "Patchwork" is not suitable for this. I agree, but I don't want to go to the Kremlin - your every step is registered there, you can't sneeze there without the GPU knowing it. In the 1st House of Soviets, it is still a little freer. I am moving to the 1st House of Soviets. Kaganovich, and Kanner, and Mekhlis, and Tovstukha also live there.

The Central Committee of the party, which was in 1922 and the first half of 1923 on Vozdvizhenka, is now moving to a huge house on Staraya Square, the 5th floor of the house is reserved for the secretaries of the Central Committee and our secret services. Having risen to the 5th floor, you can go along the corridor to the right - here is Stalin, his assistants and the secretariat of the Politburo; go along the corridor to the left - here are Molotov and Rudzutak, their assistants and the secretariat of the Organizing Bureau. If you go along the first right corridor, the first door on the left leads to the office of Kanner and Mekhlis. Only through it you can get into Stalin's office, and even then not directly, but by passing through the room where the courier is on duty (this is a large woman, Chekist Nina Fomenko). Next comes Stalin's office. Passing through it, you find yourself in a vast room that serves as a meeting place for Stalin and Molotov. Now Molotov's office is behind her. Stalin and Molotov meet and

confer many times during the day in this middle room. One can enter Stalin's office only on the report of Mekhlis. The courier enters only if Stalin calls. Kanner or Tovstukha, if they need to see Stalin, ask him beforehand by telephone whether it is possible to see him. Only two people have the right to enter Stalin without a report: me and Mekhlis. Mekhlis as a personal secretary. I - because I always need to see Stalin on Politburo business, and Politburo business is considered the most important and urgent. I go in to Stalin, whoever he has, whatever he does, and directly address him. He interrupts his conversations or his meeting and is engaged in what I bring him - the affairs of the Politburo are more urgent than all others. But this is my right both in relation to all secretaries of the Central Committee, and to all Soviet nobles. When necessary, I enter any meeting (say, for example, the official government, the Council of People's Commissars) or the office of any minister, without waiting or reporting, and directly address him, whatever he does, interrupting him. This is my prerogative as Secretary of the Politburo - I come only on Politburo business, and there are no more important and

urgent ones. In the first days of my work, I went to Stalin dozens of times a day to report to him the papers received for the Politburo. I notice very quickly that neither the content nor the fate of these papers interests him at all. When I ask him what should be done on this issue, he replies: "What do you think should be done?" I answer - in my opinion, that's it: submit it for discussion by the Politburo, or transfer it to some commission of the Central Committee, or consider the issue insufficiently worked out and agreed upon and suggest that the department coordinate it first with other interested departments, etc. Stalin immediately agrees: "Okay, so do it." Very soon I come to the conclusion that I go to him in vain and that

I need to take more initiative. So I do. In Stalin's secretariat, they explain to me that Stalin does not read any papers and is not interested in any business. I'm starting to wonder what he's interested in. In the coming days, I get an unexpected answer

to this question. I go to Stalin with some urgent matter, as always, without a report. I find Stalin talking on the phone. That is, not speaking, but listening - he holds the telephone receiver and listens. I don't want to interrupt him, I have an urgent matter, I politely wait for him to finish. It lasts for a while. Stalin listens and says nothing. I stand and wait. Finally, I notice with surprise that all four telephones that are on Stalin's desk have a receiver, and he is holding a receiver from some incomprehensible and unknown telephone to my ear, the cord from which for some reason goes into the drawer of Stalin's desk. I look again; all four Stalinist telephones: this one is the internal Central Committee telephone for conversations within the Central Committee, here the telephone operator of the Central Committee connects you; here is the "Upper Kremlin" - this is a telephone for talking through the switchboard of the "Upper Kremlin"; here is the "Lower Kremlin" - also for conversations through the switchboard of the "Lower Kremlin"; on both of these phones you can talk to very responsible employees or their families; The upper one connects more office rooms, the lower one - more apartments; the connection takes place through exchanges manned by telephone operators, who are all picked up by the GPU and serve in the GPU.

Finally, the fourth phone is a "turntable". This is an automatic telephone with a very limited number of subscribers (60, then 80, then more). He was brought in at the request of Lenin, who found it dangerous that secret and very important conversations were conducted on the telephone, which the connecting telephone lady could always eavesdrop. For conversations exclusively between members of the government, a special automatic station was installed without any service by telephone operators. Thus, the secrecy of important conversations was ensured. This "turntable" has become, by the way, the most important sign of your belonging to the highest authority. It is put only by members of the Central Committee, people's commissars, their deputies, of course, by all members and candidates of the Politburo; all these people in their offices. But members of the Politburo also have their apartments. So, Stalin does not speak on any

of these phones. I need only a few seconds to notice this and realize that Stalin has some kind of central station in his desk, with which he can turn on and eavesdrop on any conversation, of course, "turntables". The members of the government speaking on the "turntables" are all firmly convinced that they cannot be eavesdropped - the telephone is automatic. Therefore, they speak quite frankly, and so you can learn all their secrets.

Stalin raises his head and looks me straight in the eye with a heavy, fixed look. Do I understand what I discovered? Of course, I understand, and Stalin sees this. On the other hand, since I go to him without a report many times a day, sooner or later I must open this mechanic, I cannot but open it. Stalin's gaze asks me if I understand what the implications of this discovery for me personally are. Of course I understand. In the matter of Stalin's struggle for power, this secret is one of the most important: it gives Stalin the opportunity, eavesdropping on the conversations of all the Trotskys, Zinovievs and Kamenevs among themselves, to always be aware of everything that they are up to, what they think, and this is a weapon of tremendous importance. Stalin among them is one sighted, and they are all blind. And they do not suspect, and will not suspect for years, that he always knows all their thoughts, all their plans, all their combinations, and everything that they think about him, and everything that they are plotting against him. For him, this is one of the most important conditions for victory in the struggle for power. It is clear that for the slightest superfluous word about this secret,

Stalin will destroy me instantly. I also look Stalin straight in the eye. We do not say anything, but everything is clear and without words. Finally, I pretend that I do not want to distract him with my paper and leave. Probably Stalin thinks that I will keep the secret.

After considering the whole matter, I come to the conclusion that there is at least one more person, Mekhlis, who also cannot be unaware of the matter - he also enters Stalin without a report. Having chosen the right moment, I tell him that I, like him, know this secret, and only we, obviously, know it. Mekhlis, of course, expected me to know sooner or later. But he

He corrects me: besides us, someone else also knows: the one who technically organized this whole combination. This is Grisha Kanner. Now among ourselves already three of us we speak about it freely, as about our general secret. I'm curious how Kanner orchestrated this. At first he refuses and laughs it off, but the bragging takes over, and he begins to tell. Gradually I figure out the picture in all details. When Lenin gave the idea of arranging an automatic network of

"turntables", Stalin takes up the implementation of the idea. Since most of the "turntables" should be installed in the Central Committee building (three secretaries of the Central Committee, secretaries of the Politburo and Orgburo, chief assistants to the secretaries of the Central Committee and heads of the most important departments of the Central Committee), the central station will be placed in the building of the Central Committee, and since the center of the network is technically most expedient put in the point where the most subscribers are grouped (and there are most of them on the 5th floor - three secretaries of the Central Committee, secretaries of the Politburo and the Orgburo, Nazaretyan, Vasilevsky - already seven devices), then it is placed here, on the 5th floor, somewhere near Stalin's

office. The entire installation is done by a Czechoslovakian communist, a specialist in automatic telephony. Of course, in addition to all the lines and devices, Kanner orders him to make a control post, "so that in case of damage and poor functioning, it would be possible to control the lines and detect places of damage." Such a control post, with which you can join any line and listen to any conversation, was made. I don't know who placed it in Stalin's desk drawer - whether Kanner himself or the same Czechoslovak communist. But as soon as the whole installation was finished and started working, Kanner called the GPU to Yagoda on behalf of Stalin and said that the Politburo had received from the Czechoslovak Communist Party exact data and evidence that the Czechoslovak technician was a spy; knowing this, he was given to finish his work on the installation of an automatic station; now he must be immediately arrested and shot. The GPU will receive the relevant documents additionally. At this time, the GPU shot "spies" without the slightest hesitation. However, Yagoda was

embarrassed that we were talking about a communist - there would be no trouble later. He called Stalin just in case. Stalin confirmed. The Czechoslovak communist was immediately shot. Yagoda did not receive any documents and called Kanner a few days later. Kanner told him that the matter was not over - spies and enemies had infiltrated the top of the Czechoslovak Communist Party; materials on this subject continue to be extremely secret and will not come out of the archives of the Politburo.

Yagoda was satisfied with this explanation. Needless to say, the accusations were completely invented and there were no papers in the archives of the Politburo on this case.

There is a problem in front of me. What should I do? I am a party member. I know that one Politburo member has the ability to spy on other Politburo members. Should I warn these other members of the Politburo? What consequences this will have for me

personally, there is no doubt for me. Whether I die as a victim of an "accident" or whether the GPU makes a case about me for Stalin that I am a saboteur and agent of British imperialism, Stalin will in any case deal with me. For a great goal, you can sacrifice yourself. Is it worth it? That is, in order to prevent one member of the Politburo from eavesdropping on the conversations of others. I decide that there is no need to rush here. I know Stalin's secret: I will always have time to reveal it, if it is very important. While I do not feel this importance - half a year of being in the Orgburo has already taken away from me a lot of illusions; I already clearly see that there is a struggle for power, and a rather unprincipled one; I don't feel any particular sympathy for any of those fighting for power. And, finally, if Stalin is eavesdropping on Zinoviev, then perhaps Zinoviev is somehow eavesdropping on Stalin in turn. Who knows? I decide: wait and see.

During the first time of my work as the secretary of the Politburo, I was extremely busy with the reorganization of my secretariat. While examining various papers of the Politburo, in passing I come across traces of amazing and interesting cases.

Here, for example, are the reports of the GPU on ongoing and yet fruitless searches. It's not easy for me to get to the bottom of things. It turns out that at the end of the civil war, the Politburo, on the one hand, stated that the cavalry played a decisive role in it, and great attention should be paid to its improvement, and on the other hand, that in

during the civil war, horse breeding in Soviet Russia was completely destroyed, the livestock of horse factories, including the best breeding producers, were completely requisitioned by military units and for the most part died at the fronts. To repair the cavalry, it was necessary to start with the acquisition of breeding stallions in order to restore horse breeding. But at that time - the end of 1920, the beginning of 1921 - no countries had yet recognized Soviet power, there was no normal trade with foreign countries, no sums for purchases abroad could be deposited in foreign banks - they would now be seized by complaints of foreigners robbed by the Bolshevik revolution. How to be? It was not without difficulty that a method was found. Through the dark businessmen, through whom the jewels that came from the robbery of all bourgeois by the Soviet government were sold abroad, it was possible to establish the necessary line. It was possible to buy the necessary stallions in Argentina, supposedly from a Swedish horse breeder, transport them normally to Sweden in the north, near the poorly guarded Soviet border, and then transport them to Soviet Russia. It was allocated for this operation 7 million dollars in American currency. But since the operation could not be carried out through banks, it was necessary to transport all this currency to Argentina. It was impossible to entrust this amount to dark businessmen. The Politburo decided to single out an old Bolshevik, either a member or a candidate member of the Central Committee, who enjoyed complete confidence. All the necessary (false) documents were prepared for him, a long chain of guards and escorts from agents of the foreign department of the GPU, and dollars were handed to him in large denominations. He left with his dollars and at some point on the way he suddenly disappeared. A thorough investigation by the GPU led to the full conviction that he had not fallen victim to an accident or banditry. It has been undeniably proven that he thoroughly prepared his disappearance and escaped with his dollars. The Politburo ordered to find him at all costs and no matter how much it costs. But no searches yielded any results. He disappeared as if he had sunk into the water. In the reports of the GPU, he appeared under some kind of conditional nickname. In the end, I could establish his real name by thoroughly rummaging through the archives of the Politburo, but I did not have time for this. I decided that I would always have time to establish which of the old, very prominent Bolsheviks had ceased

to appear in the Bolshevik elite from that date, in all reports, lists of members of the Central Committee, etc. But I did not do this. I leave this riddle to be solved by one of the Party historians or "Kremlinologists".

The meetings of the Politburo usually took place in the meeting room of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. Almost the entire length of the long, but not wide hall stretches a table, or rather, two, since there is a passage in the middle of it. The table is covered with red cloth. At one end of the table is the chairman's chair. Lenin always sat here. Kamenev now sits in this chair, presiding over meetings of the Politburo. Members of the Politburo sit on both sides of the table facing each other. To the left of Kamenev is Stalin. On the right - Zinoviev. Between Kamenev and Zinoviev, a small table was placed at the end of the table; I am sitting behind him. I have a telephone on the table, which I use to communicate with my staff, who are in the next room, where those called to the Politburo meeting are waiting. When the assistant calls me, my light bulb flashes. I tell her who to let into the meeting room for each item on the agenda. The resolutions of the Politburo, which I write down on separate cards, I pass across the table to Stalin, who is sitting opposite me. He looks through and usually returns to me - this means: "no objections." If the question is very important and complicated, he will give me the card through Kamenev, who looks over it and puts a birdie ("I agree"). Behind Stalin

and Zinoviev sit the rest of the Politburo. Usually next to Zinoviev is Bukharin, followed by Molotov (he is a candidate), followed by Tomsy. Rykov is behind Stalin, usually Tsyurupa is behind him - he is not a member of the Politburo, but he is deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and a member of the Central Committee: since Lenin, it has become a tradition that he always participates in meetings of the Politburo rather to keep abreast of decisions than with an advisory vote; True, he rarely speaks, he listens more. Behind him is Trotsky. Kalinin now follows him, then Tomsy. At the very end of the hall is a closed door to the next hall.

The adjacent hall, in which the summoned are waiting, is full of people. Here, almost the entire government (people's commissars and their deputies) is always in full force. At a regular meeting

The Politburo is discussing a good hundred questions concerning almost all departments. All those summoned walk about, talk, smoke, listen to the jokes that Radek composes and tells them, and use the opportunity to discuss and resolve all sorts of interdepartmental matters. Only persons summoned on this issue are admitted to the meeting. They enter the hall at a trot - the time of the Politburo is precious. The question is over - those called on it without ceremony are exhibited from the meeting room.

Kamenev presides admirably. He leads the debate very well, interrupts unnecessary conversations, quickly comes to a decision. In front of him is a chronometer; on a piece of paper, he notes the time allowed to each speaker, the time of the beginning of the speech and the end. Stalin never presides - he would not be able to do so. At the meeting, members of the Politburo constantly exchange notes on special small forms, entitled "For the meeting of the Politburo." Something new is always

well remembered. Most of the hundreds of meetings of the Politburo at which I was secretary, it is difficult for me to remember anything - it has become a routine. But I see the first meeting clearly. The meeting is

scheduled for ten o'clock. At ten minutes to ten I'm there, checking whether everything is in order, whether the members of the Politburo are supplied with the necessary materials. At one minute to ten, Trotsky enters with military precision and sits down in his place. Three or four minutes later, the members of the troika enter one after another - they, apparently, were conferring about something before entering. Zinoviev enters first, he does not look in the direction of Trotsky, and Trotsky also pretends not to see him, and examines the papers. The third is Stalin. He goes straight to Trotsky and with a sweeping, broad gesture shakes his hand in a friendly manner. I clearly feel the falsity and falseness of this gesture; Stalin is an ardent enemy of Trotsky and cannot stand him. I remember Lenin: "Do not trust Stalin: he will make a rotten compromise and deceive." But I still have a lot to learn about my patron.

The fact that the members of the troika at the meeting are sitting next to each other at the end of the table makes it extremely easy for them to agree on joint decisions - the exchange of notes, the text of which the rest of the Politburo members practically do not see, and remarks in an undertone, mutual support - while the troika works in complete agreement, and its mechanism has no

interruptions. Kamenev not only conducts meetings well, he maintains a lively tone, often making jokes; it seems that this tone has been going on since the time of Lenin. Zinoviev is reclining in his armchair, often thrusting his hand into his hair of dubious cleanliness, he looks bored and not very pleased. Stalin smokes a pipe, often gets up and walks along the table, stopping in front of the speakers. He speaks little.

Chapter 5. Observations of the Secretary of the Politburo

GERMAN REVOLUTION. EXPANSION OF REVVOENSKOVET. FREEDOM INSIDE THE PARTY. PARTY BUREACRATISM AND MANEUVERS AROUND IT. DISCUSSION. RIGHT OPPOSITION AND LEFT TROTSKY. STALIN'S METHOD. STALIN IS ANTISEMITE. POSKREBYSHEV.

Two weeks after the beginning of my work in the Politburo, on August 23, 1923, I secretary at a special, extremely secret meeting of the Politburo, devoted to only one question - the revolution in Germany. Members and candidates of the Politburo are present at the meeting, as well as Radek, Pyatakov and Tsyurupa. Radek, a member of the executive committee of the Comintern, makes a report on the rapidly growing revolutionary wave in Germany. Trotsky is the first to speak after him. "Chronically inflamed Lev Davydovich," as evil tongues call him, feels in his element and delivers a strong speech full of enthusiasm. Here, comrades, is finally

this storm, which we have been impatiently waiting for so many years and which is called upon to change the face of the world. The events that are taking place will be of tremendous importance. The German revolution is the collapse of the capitalist world. But we must see reality as it is. For us, it's an all-in game. We must stake not

only the fate of the German revolution, but also the existence of the Soviet Union. If the German revolution succeeds, capitalist Europe will not be able to allow it and will try to crush it by force of arms. For our part, we must throw all our forces into the struggle, since the outcome of the struggle will decide everything. Either we win, and the victory of the world revolution is assured, or we lose, and then we lose both the first proletarian state in the world and our power in Russia. So we have to show great energy. We are too late with our preparations. The German revolution is underway. Can't you hear her iron tread? Can't you feel how high the wave has risen? We must hurry so that the cataclysm does not take us by surprise. Don't you feel like it's been a matter of weeks? The Politburo did not share Trotsky's enthusiasm in the least. No, they didn't see or feel it. Of course,

they agreed that the German revolution was a very serious matter, but they did not agree at all with linking the success of the German revolution with the very existence of Soviet power in Russia. And then, are the events in Germany really already on the agenda? Zinoviev does not think this at all. Question of weeks? As always, Comrade Trotsky's temperament takes him away from reality. Well, if this is a matter of months:

and in general, in such important things one must be careful and act deliberately. Stalin, without leaving general and vague phrases, added in the same vein that so far there was no need to speak of any revolution in Germany. This autumn? Well, if the revolutionary situation develops by spring. But the troika, trying to emphasize that it did not at all agree with Trotsky's forecasts and, in any case, would not go along with him, nevertheless felt that the revolutionary wave in Germany was rising, and a number of measures

were decided for its development in every possible way. A commission of the Central Committee of four members was set up to direct all work on the German revolution. It included Radek, Pyatakov, Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council of the National Economy, Unshlikht,

Deputy Chairman of the GPU, and Vasya Schmidt, People's Commissar of Labour. They immediately went to Germany with false passports as part of their underground work. Functions among them were distributed as follows. Radek was to lead the Central Committee of the German Communist Party, passing on the directives from Moscow as directives from the Comintern. Schmidt (a German by birth) was to lead the

organization of revolutionary cells in the trade unions, that is, those factory committees that, after the coup, were to become soviets and, at their emergency congress, were to proclaim Soviet power in Germany. Pyatakov was entrusted with the overall coordination of all work and communication with Moscow. Unshlikht was entrusted with the organization of armed uprising detachments for the coup, their recruitment and supply of weapons. He was also entrusted with the organization of the German check for the extermination of the bourgeoisie and opponents of the revolution after the coup. Finally, the ambassador in Berlin, Krestinsky, was entrusted with the financing of the German revolution from the commercial funds of the State Bank, deposited in Berlin for commercial operations. In the very first reports from Berlin, Pyatakov reported on the low quality of the leadership of the German Communist Party. In his opinion, neither in terms of organizational nor political leaders of the Communist Party were far from up to par. They were called to Moscow. They were not allowed into the Politburo, they were dealt with by Zinoviev and Bukharin. The matter was

complicated by the fact that in addition to the official leadership (the Brandler group) selected by the Comintern, at the top of the German Communist Party there was another group that had essentially more weight - the Maslov group - Ruth Fischer. She behaved very independently in relation to the leadership of the Comintern. Zinoviev did not like this extremely, and he raised the question to the Politburo even in such a way that Maslov should be presented with an ultimatum: either he will receive a large amount of money, leave the party and leave Germany, or Unshlikht will be ordered to liquidate him. But Maslov held firm and did not make any compromises.

While all these auctions were going on, it began to become clear that the German Communist Party was completely unprepared for quick and decisive action, and its work was lame on all four legs. On the contrary, the apparatus of the embassy, consulates and trade mission in Germany acted quickly and

exemplary, developing extremely active and fruitful work. The Politburo shifted the center of gravity to him. The plenipotentiary in Germany, Krestinsky, was included as the fifth member in the commission of the Central Committee. The embassy and the trade mission were engaged in the purchase and transport of weapons, and organizational work. In Russia, all communists of German origin or German speakers were mobilized and sent to Germany for underground work. Pyatakov's reports became more and more optimistic. The extremely

deteriorating economic situation in Germany aroused ever greater discontent among the working masses. Skillful and broad propaganda added fuel to the fire, and the revolutionary wave grew rapidly. The Politburo met with increasing frequency to discuss various practical issues of revolutionary work. Pyatakov's reports were accurate and detailed. Huge funds were allocated - it was decided not to spare the funds. The original opposition of the troika to Trotsky was forgotten - now everyone agreed that the German revolution was on the nose.

At the end of September, an emergency meeting of the Politburo was held, so secret that only members of the Politburo and myself were called to it. None of the members of the Central Committee was admitted to it. It was convened in order to fix the date of the coup in Germany. He was appointed on November 9, 1923.

This was the plan for the revolution. On the occasion of the anniversary of the Russian October Revolution, the working masses were to take to the streets for mass demonstrations. The Red Hundreds of Unshlikht were supposed to provoke armed conflicts with the police in order to cause bloody clashes and repressions, fan the indignation of the working masses and produce a general workers' uprising. According to a predetermined

plan, the Unshlikht detachments were to occupy the most important state institutions and a Soviet revolutionary government was to be created from members of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party; after that, an emergency congress of factory committees was to proclaim Soviet power. The decision on the date of the coup was not to be known to anyone, even

from the members

Central Committee of the Party. I prepared the minutes of the meeting in the following form:

Listened: Resolved:

Comrade Zinoviev's question. See special

folder. This is all that was communicated to the members of the Central Committee as the minutes of the meeting of the Politburo. Nevertheless, I wrote down the decisions made as a resolution of the Politburo and placed them in my "special folder". A few words about the "special folder". There was a fireproof safe in my office, the only key to which I had. The safe contained top-secret resolutions of the Politburo, which were supposed to be known only to members of the Politburo. Members of the Central Committee who would like to familiarize themselves with them had to ask permission from the Politburo, and only with this permission could I show them the relevant resolution. I must say that in all the time of my work in the Politburo there was no such case.

But the German Revolution of 1923 failed. In October it became clear that the preparations had been taken too late, that the deadlines had been calculated poorly, that the revolutionary wave was at its apogee and was beginning to wane, and that the necessary organizational and propaganda work required at least another two or three months. Soon the revolutionary wave began to subside so rapidly that the Politburo had to state that there were practically no chances for a coup and that it should be postponed until better times. Trotsky made a number of sharp criticisms about the fact that Zinoviev and the Comintern overlooked everything and took care of everything too late, and Zinoviev and Stalin escaped with talk that Trotsky overestimated the severity of the revolutionary situation and that in the end they turned out to be right. In the Comintern, all the blame was placed on the incapable leadership of the Brandler group, and after a long internal squabble in April 1924, the Brandler group was declared "right" and expelled from the party. The leadership of the German Communist Party was transferred to Maslov's group - Ruth Fischer. But then, in the struggle between the troika and Trotsky, this group leaned over to Trotsky's side, and it was soon declared Trotskyite and removed from the leadership of the Communist Party, not without difficulty. In 1927, she finally headed the Trotskyist organization in Germany. In September, the troika decided to deal the first serious blow to Trotsky. At first

Civil War Trotsky was the organizer and permanent leader of the Red Army and served as People's Commissar for Military Affairs and Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic. Troika planned his removal from the Red Army in three stages. First, the composition of the Revolutionary Military Council should be expanded, which was to be filled with opponents of Trotsky so that he would be in the minority in the Revolutionary Military Council. At the second stage, the administration of the Military Ministry was to be reorganized, Trotsky's deputy Sklyansky was removed, and Frunze was appointed in his place. Finally, the third stage is the removal of Trotsky from the post of the People's Commissaria

On September 23, at the plenum of the Central Committee, the troika proposed expanding the membership of the Revolutionary Military Council. The new members introduced into it were all opponents of Trotsky. Among the innovations was Stalin. The significance of this measure was perfectly clear to Trotsky. He made a thunderous speech: the proposed measure is a new link in the chain of behind-the-scenes intrigues that are waged against him and have the ultimate goal of removing him from the leadership of the revolution. Having no desire to fight these intrigues and wanting only one thing - to serve the cause of the revolution, he proposes to the Central Committee to release him from all his ranks and titles and allow him to go as a simple soldier in the brewing German revolution. He hopes that at least this will not be

denied him. All this sounded loud and was quite uncomfortable for the trio. Zinoviev takes the floor with the clear intention of giving everything a touch of farce and proposes that he also be relieved of all posts and honors and sent along with Trotsky to the soldiers of the German revolution. Stalin, finally turning all this into a comedy, solemnly declares that in no case can the Central Committee agree to risk two such precious lives and asks the Central Committee not to let their "beloved leaders" go to Germany. Now this proposal has received the most serious vote. Everything took on the character of a well-played play, but then the Leningrad Central Committee Komarov took the word "voice from the people", with deliberately proletarian manners. "I don't understand only one thing, why Comrade Trotsky is wandering around like that." This "roaming" finally blew up Trotsky. He jumped up and said: "Please remove me from the cast of this humiliating comedy." And rushed to the exit.

It was a break. Silence of a historical moment reigned in the hall. But full of resentment Trotsky decided, for greater effect, to slam the door as he left.

The meeting took place in the Throne Room of the Royal Palace. The hall door is huge, iron and massive. To open it, Trotsky pulled it with all his might. The door swung slowly and solemnly. At that moment, one should have realized that there are doors that cannot be slammed. But Trotsky, in his excitement, did not notice this and tried his best to slap it. To close, the door swam just as slowly and solemnly. The idea was this: the great leader of the revolution broke off with his insidious slanderers and, in order to emphasize the gap, leaving them, slams the door in his hearts. And it turned out like this: an extremely irritated man with a goatee is floundering on the doorknob in an unbearable struggle with a heavy and dull door. It turned out bad. With this decision of the plenum on the Revolutionary Military Council, the struggle

between the troika and Trotsky enters an open phase. This struggle was the main occupation of the troika in the last months of 1923. The main political documents of this era are devoted to this struggle and reflect it. That is why the later historians of the Party also understand the inner-Party events of that time as a struggle of the majority of the Central Committee against the opposition and precisely the Trotskyite opposition. The reality was quite different, and it was much more complicated.

In order to understand the historical truth of that time, several preliminary explanations must be made. The NEP, that is, Lenin's

retreat from communism to some free market practice and the emergence of an incentive for free management, led to a rapid improvement in living conditions. Peasants began to sow again, private trade and handicrafts began to bring goods that had long disappeared to the market, the country began to revive. The monetary reform that had begun led to the replacement of worthless billions with a solid and firm red ruble. But the state and bureaucratic administration, accustomed to the command of the times of yesterday's integral communism, did not keep pace with life. In particular, the supply of cities, workers

and the servants were still very bad. The discontent of the workers, the only class that dared to express their discontent, manifested itself in a wave of strikes that took place in the summer of 1923. This was immediately reflected in the creation of Bogdanov and G. Myasnikov in the party "Workers' Pravda" and "Working Group". These groups accused the party apparatus of bureaucratic degeneration and complete indifference to the interests of the workers.

At this time, political life did not go beyond the party. The country was divided into two camps. One is a huge non-Party mass, completely deprived of rights and completely given over to the power of the GPU. This mass was crushed by the dictatorship, they realized that they had no rights not only to any political life, but even to any kind of justice. The idea of justice was abolished. There was a court, regarded as an instrument of dictatorship and guided in theory by class consciousness and the needs of the class struggle, but in practice by the complete arbitrariness of petty party satraps. And then this miserable court was related only to petty domestic and criminal cases. In everything important and fundamental, considered as a political area, the "sphere of the class struggle", there was complete arbitrariness of the GPU organs, which could arrest anyone on some suspicions known only to the GPU, shoot a person by decision of some unknown "troika" Or, according to her peremptory decision, drive him to 10 years of extermination hard labor, officially called a "concentration camp". The entire population trembled in fear of this organization of oppressive terror.

On the contrary, in the second camp, which consisted of several hundred thousand members of the Communist Party, quite a lot of freedom reigned. You could have your own opinion, disagree with the ruling bodies, challenge their decisions. This "intra-Party democracy" dates back to pre-revolutionary times, when it was a normal phenomenon for a party, participation in which was a matter of free will of its members. In these pre-revolutionary times, there was also a fierce struggle for leadership in the party, which, by the way, ensured the right to dispose of the party fund and the right to own the party's press organs. There was no GPU yet, it was necessary to try to win by persuasion. Even Lenin did not always succeed in this, although the party (and its main character - the parties of professional revolutionaries) were the brainchild of Lenin. More than once, Lenin remained in the minority (and lost both the cash desk and the party press), and with great difficulty and the implementation of difficult and not always beautiful combinations, he had to win them back. But this free struggle within the party created a long habit of inner-party freedom, which still continued (it would disappear only a few years later, when Stalin took everything into his own hands).

On the other hand, since political life was possible only within the party, then social processes. what was happening in the country could come out only indirectly, through the influence and pressure of the non-Party masses and their life on the members of the Party. This was comparatively easy in the influence of the working classes, since the party, imbued with Marxist phraseology, was constantly looking for contact with the workers. Hence the rather rapid penetration and revival in the early autumn of 1923 of groups of various "workers' opposition" in the party. Hence the rather lively reaction of the party leadership to them. Fearing that Trotsky would not seize this opposition, the members of the majority of the Central Committee tried to seize the initiative. Trotsky at the meetings of the Politburo began to savagely attack the party bureaucracy. I well remember the scene when, looking point-blank at Molotov, who was sitting opposite him on the other side of the table, Trotsky launched into a sharp philippic against "the soulless party bureaucrats who, with stone backs, stifle any manifestation of free initiative and creativity of the working masses." Molotov, whose name Trotsky did not name, had to keep silent and pretend that it was not about him at all, and even better to nod his head approvingly. Instead, adjusting his pince-nez and stammering, he said: "Not everyone can be geniuses, comrade Trotsky." (It was a pitiful sight; I was embarrassed for Molotov. By the

way, how history is written: in 1929, finding myself abroad, I described this scene in the press; what was my surprise when, in 1932, in the book "Soviet Portraits" by Dmitrievsky, the Soviet diplomat who fled from the Soviets, my entire text was given, but after that, according to Dmitrievsky, Molotov accepted the challenge. He smiled calmly. Quietly, as always, stuttering a little, he said:

geniuses, Comrade Trotsky; *and the strongest is always the one, who wins.* " Of

course, Molotov did not add anything of the kind, but for Dmitrievsky in 1932, Trotsky was a fanatical and frenzied Jewish revolutionary, and Molotov was a firm and excellent leader of the new course of Russia, supposedly embarking on the path of patriotism and nationalism; whence this fictitious addition). In order to seize the initiative,

the majority of the Politburo solemnly condemned bureaucracy in the party and immediately created a commission headed by Dzerzhinsky, which was supposed to sort out questions about bureaucracy in the party, and about the sources of discontent among the working masses. At the September plenum of the Central Committee, the Dzerzhinsky commission made a report on internal party politics, reducing the issue of bureaucracy to the fact that in many party organizations "appointment" prevails instead of elections.

More serious was her report on "price scissors". The Party set prices too high for manufactured goods and too low for agricultural products. It was a policy of restoring and building industry at the expense of the peasantry. It aroused sharp dissatisfaction among the peasantry, who felt cheated: they were given the freedom to sell their surplus on the market, but the state, which owned the main part of the trading apparatus, forced it to sell grain too cheaply and pay too much for manufactured goods. The Plenum instructed the Politburo to take "practical measures" on this matter (that is, the formulation of the whole big problem was brushed aside for the time being).

On October 8, Trotsky sends a letter to the Politburo supposedly on these economic questions. In fact, the essence of the letter was in a sharp attack against the party bureaucracy and in stating that it is not the party that makes any decisions, but that the bureaucrats, the party secretaries, are in charge of everything. At the same time, this letter began to be widely distributed in the party by supporters of Trotsky. The troika preferred not to act itself, but ordered the obedient Central Control Commission to forbid the circulation of Trotsky's letter, which the Central Control Commission did on October 15. But on October 15, the Central Committee received the so-called "Statement 46" on the intra-party regime. This letter came from an alliance of two groups: the old group of decists of democratic centralism, in which Osinsky, V. Smirnov, Drobnis and Sapronov played the greatest role, and a new group of Trotsky's like-minded people headed by Pyatakov. Preobrazhensky, Joseph Kossior and Beloborodov.

Actually, there was nothing special in these letters and statements, and they did not at all reflect the processes that took place in the depths of the party. The Central Committee decided to get rid of them with a resolution, and at the end of October the Plenum of the Central Committee, condemning them, decided that a discussion in the party on all these issues was inappropriate, and in order to show that the Central Committee itself was primarily against bureaucracy, a joint meeting of the Politburo and the Presidium was convened on November 5. The Central Control Commission, which unanimously adopted a resolution "on party building", in which the loyalty of the party leadership to inner-party democracy was solemnly proclaimed and bureaucratism in the party was just as solemnly condemned. In order to explain all this to the Party, Zinoviev wrote an article, "The New Tasks of the Party," which boiled down to talk about strengthening intra-Party life, and published it in Pravda on November 7. The Politburo expected calm. But instead, some stormy and incomprehensible processes began to take place in the party organizations. In particular, in many organizations of the capital, voting took place not in favor of the Central Committee, but against it. Then the Politburo in mid-November decided to open a party discussion and, by concentrating an

energetic campaign against Trotsky, crush him and the opposition. The famous "one-sided discussion" began. Both in press articles and in speeches at cells, the Central Committee mobilized all forces against Trotsky and his "Trotskyist" opposition, accusing them of all mortal sins. What seemed most surprising in all this was that Trotsky was silent, did not take part in the discussion, and did not answer all the accusations in any way. At meetings of the Politburo, he read French novels, and when one of the members of the Politburo turned to him, he pretended that he was extremely s

I quickly figured out this riddle, receiving a lot of various materials about what was happening in the party. The point was that the opposition in the autumn of 1923 (the so-called First Opposition) was not at all Trotskyist. Generally, one should treat

extremely skeptical of the political contours of the oppositions of all these years. Usually it was about the struggle for power. The enemy was accused of some kind of deviation (right, left, kulak, underestimating something, overestimating, forgetting something, deviating from the precepts of Ilyich, etc.), but in reality all this was invented and inflated: having defeated the enemy, his policy (which had just been declared criminal, Menshevik, kulak, etc.) was immediately accepted without any hesitation. Generally speaking, Trotsky was, so to speak, "more to the left" than the Central Committee, that is, he was a more consistent communist. Meanwhile, the Central Committee glued him to the "Right" opposition. This right-wing opposition represented something like a failed ideological Thermidor, a completely spontaneous reaction that developed spontaneously within the party, without a program, without leaders. Neither Trotsky, nor 46, nor the workers' opposition expressed it in any way. It was the opposition to communism on the part of the mainly intellectual and idealistic elements who had joined the party in the first years of the revolution, and who were the first to see that their hopes of building some kind of better society turned out to be illusions, that their hopes that the revolution was being made for some the common good, were not justified at all, and that some new bureaucratic class is being formed, which appropriates all the benefits from the revolution, reducing the workers and peasants, for whom the revolution was allegedly made, to the position of powerless and impoverished slaves. So to say "for what fought?".

This reaction did not find any leaders or the necessary formulations, and was expressed only in mass protest and mass voting against the Central Committee. Trotsky quickly discerned the right-wing nature of the opposition. But then his position became very difficult. If he had been an unprincipled opportunist, having become the head of the opposition and adopted its right-wing course, it soon became clear that he had every chance of winning a majority in the party and winning. But this meant a course to the right, Thermidor, the elimination of communism. Trotsky was a fanatical and 100% communist. He could not take this path. But he could not openly declare that he was against this opposition - he would have lost his weight in the party - both among the followers of the Central Committee who attacked him and the opposition, and would have remained an isolated general without an army. He chose to remain silent and maintain ambiguity. The tragedy was that

the opposition, which had arisen spontaneously, had neither leaders nor programs, had to accept Trotsky, who was imposed on it as a leader. This soon ensured her quick defeat.

But so far the discussion and voting in the cells proceeded at a stormy pace and more and more turned into a defeat for the Central Committee. Trotsky decided to try to turn the situation in his favor, and at the same time give his slogans to the opposition. On December 8, he sent a letter to the Central Committee. It was simultaneously read out at the party activists of the Krasnopresnensky district and published in Pravda on December 11 in the form of the article "New Course". In it, he accused the party elite of bureaucratic degeneration.

In mid-December, the GPU timidly tried to inform the Politburo that in most of the party organizations the majority was not on the side of the Central Committee. I state that in the huge cell of the Central Committee itself, the majority votes against the Central Committee. I am asking the secretary of the Moscow Committee of the Zelensky party about the results of the voting in the Moscow organization. I receive a panic report - the Central Committee has lost the majority in the capital organization, the most important in the country; it equals the provincial organizations.

At the meeting of the troika (approval of the agenda), I report Zelensky's report. For triples is an unexpected blow.

Of course, the issue is of paramount importance. Zinoviev makes a long speech. This is a clear attempt to find and formulate a general line of political strategy according to Lenin's schemes. But he wants to give his own - he wants to justify his position as a political leader; he speaks of the "philosophy of the age", of common aspirations (which he finds in the general desire for equality, etc.). Then Kamenev takes the floor. He draws attention to the fact that the political processes in the country can only be expressed through the party; revealing a considerable political scent, he suspects that the opposition is right; switching to Leninist-Marxist jargon, he says that this opposition reflects the strength of the resurgent classes hostile to communism - the prosperous peasant, the private owner and the intelligentsia; we must return to the Leninist formulation of the question of the bond between the working class and the peasantry.

While speeches are going on at these heights, Stalin is silent and sucks his pipe. As a matter of fact, Zinoviev and Kamenev are not interested in his opinion - they are convinced that in matters of political strategy, Stalin's opinion is of no interest at all. But Kamenev is a very polite and tactful person. So he says: "And you, Comrade Stalin, what do you think about this question?" "Ah," says Comrade Stalin, "on what question exactly?" (Indeed, many questions were raised). Kamenev, trying to descend to the level of Stalin, he says: "But on the question of how to win a majority in the party." "You know, comrades," says Stalin, "what I think about this: I think that it doesn't matter at all who and how will vote in the party; but what is extremely important is who and how will count the votes. Even Kamenev, who must already know Stalin, clears his throat emphatically.

The next day, Stalin summons Nazaretyan to his office and confers with him for a long time. Nazareth leaves the office rather sour. But he is an obedient person. On the same day, by a resolution of the Orgburo, he was appointed head of the party department of Pravda and began to work. Pravda

receives reports on meetings of party organizations and the results of voting, especially in Moscow. The work of the Nazarene is very simple. At a meeting of such and such a cell, say, 300 people voted for the Central Committee, 600 against; Nazaretyan forwards: for the Central Committee - 600, against - 300. This is how it is printed in Pravda. And so on all organizations. Of course, a cell, having read a false report on the results of its voting in Pravda, protests, calls Pravda, and presses on the department of party life. Nazaretyan responds politely, promising to check immediately. Upon verification, it turns out "that you are absolutely right, there was an unfortunate mistake, they mixed it up in the printing house; you know, they are very busy; the editors of Pravda apologize to you; correction will be printed. Each cell believes that this is a single error that happened only to it, and does not realize that this is happening in most cells. Meanwhile, a general picture is gradually being created that the Central Committee is beginning to win along the whole line. The provinces are becoming more cautious and are beginning to follow Moscow, that is, the Central

Committee. Meanwhile, a storm breaks out at the Politburo. True, a storm in a teacup. The fact is that Mekhlis and Kanner, in need of assistants, take employees with indefinite functions to help themselves (go ahead, in fact, define the functions of Kanner himself). Kanner is helped by a young amiable Jew, whose party nickname is Bombin. He is very sweet, everyone calls him "Bomb", he sings Lohengrin's aria "Oh, my swan" well and carefully hides that he may have any connections with the GPU (especially from me, since my bad relations with the GPU are already in this time is known to everyone). Mekhlis took two people to help him, firstly, Makhover, who was the Manager of Affairs of the Central Committee of the Komsomol and now, by age, has left the Komsomol and is moving to the party line (he will end up being his personal and devoted secretary at the time of Ordzhonikidze's suicide) ; secondly, Yuzhak, an extremely chubby and red-faced young Jew. Nazareth is a very careful person.

He not only forwards the voting results of the organizations, but, in order for Stalin to give himself a correct account of the true state of affairs, he sends reports to Stalin both about how voting actually takes place and about how Pravda remakes it. Mekhlis reports these reports to Stalin. Quite unexpectedly

for the Stalinist secretariat, Yuzhak turns out to be a hidden Trotskyist. The bulletins hang on Mekhlis's desk. Yuzhak kidnaps them and delivers them to Trotsky. Trotsky makes a scandal at a meeting of the Politburo. It is clear to everyone that Nazaretyan is working on Stalin's orders. Members of the Politburo pretend to share Trotsky's justified indignation, and Stalin is the first. He promises to investigate immediately. The investigation lasts a week, but by the end of it everything is already over, the desired result has been achieved, the machine has gone in the opposite direction, the majority goes over to the side of the Central Committee, the opposition has been defeated. Stalin reports to the Politburo that the investigation has clarified

the personal guilt of Nazaretyan, who was immediately recalled from the party department of Pravda and removed from Stalin's secretariat. The Nazarenes are sent to the provinces. He will be chairman of the regional control commission in the Urals. He will not forgive Stalin that Stalin did not try to defend him

and, on the contrary, put all the blame on him. He will not return to Stalin and will be shot by Stalin in 1937. I don't know what Yuzhak's fate is, but I don't doubt for a second that he didn't survive the thirties - Stalin has a good memory, and he never forgives anything.

I learn new details about Stalin all the time. Somehow, suddenly, I find out that Stalin is an anti-Semite, which explains a lot to me in the next two years. I find

out about this by accident. We stand and talk with Mekhlis (Mekhlis is a Jew). Stalin comes out of his office and approaches us. Mekhlis says: "Here, Comrade Stalin, a letter has been received from Comrade Faivilovich. Comrade Faivilovich is very dissatisfied with the behavior of the Central Committee. He protests, makes the Central Committee visible, demands, considers the policy of the Central Committee to be erroneous, "etc. its members and leaders are not yet members of the party and have no right to discuss the political problems of the party - at least within the framework of the Komsomol - all attempts of this kind are abruptly cut off: where are you climbing; it's too early for you; this is not your mind's business yet). Stalin flares up: "What is this lousy Jew imagining!" Immediately, Comrade Stalin realizes that he has said something superfluous. He turns and walks into his

office. I look at Mekhlis with curiosity: "Well, how did you swallow it, Lyovka?" - "What? What? - pretends to be surprised, Mekhlis. - What's the matter?" - "How in what? I say. "You are still a Jew." "No," Mekhlis says, "I am not a Jew, I am a communist." This is a comfortable position. She will allow Mekhlis to be faithful until the end of his days and

a devoted Stalinist, and render irreplaceable services to Stalin. I am

still interested in how Stalin, being an anti-Semite, manages with two Jewish secretaries, Mekhlis and Kanner. I very quickly find out that they are taken for camouflage purposes. During the civil war, Stalin led a group of freemen on the fronts who hated Trotsky, his deputy Sklyansky and their Jewish employees in the People's Commissariat of War, which gave birth to suspicions of Stalinist anti-Semitism in the party elite. In the subsequent transition to civilian work, Stalin, in order to dispel these suspicions, took Kanner and Mekhlis into his closest collaborators, first into his collaborators in Nar. Com. Slave. Cross. Inspectorate, the nominal head of which Stalin was in 1921 - 1922, and then to his secretariat in the Central Committee. In this choice he never had to repent. Kanner and Mekhlis have always been his devoted collaborators. Kanner, however, he still shot in 1937 just in case - Kanner was his attorney and executor in too many dark cases. At the end of 1923, this whole story with the opposition ends. It has one little funny consequence. Since during the party

discussion the majority in the cell of the Central Committee was won by the opposition, the question arises as to who is to blame. First of all, the complete mediocrity of the secretary of the Central Committee cell is clear. This is an old party beard, but an obvious blockhead. Kanner decides to replace him. But such an important thing as the choice of a new secretary of the cell of the Central Committee (there are almost one and a half thousand members in the cell - all employees of the Central Committee apparatus are communists), he still does not dare to carry out without the sanction of Mekhlis and mine. He puts the question before us. We are considering. Mekhlis sighs: "We are the workers' party; and in the cell of the Central Committee - all employees, clerks and bureaucrats, not a single worker; and here, according to party orthodoxy, a worker from a machine tool, or at least manual labor, would be needed. And what kind of manual labor is there in the Central Committee? For fun, I say: "Stop. There is one manual worker in the Central Committee." - "It can't be," my interlocutors say, "You're making it up." "I assure you there is." "Who is this blue bird?"

I explain to them that when I worked for Molotov as the secretary of Izvestia TsK, the meager magazine I spoke about above, this magazine came in printed form from the printing house to the expedition of the Central Committee and from there it was sent to party organizations. There was one worker on the expedition who packed all these bales, carried them and sent them out. Small, bald and, it seems, not a fool, the surname is Poskrebyshchev. With general laughter, it was decided to call him. Poskrebyshchev comes, not understanding anything: why and why he may be needed by Stalin's secretariat. We talk with him. The guy is not a fool and will be obedient to the extreme. Almost

out of mischief, we decide to nominate him to the secretary of the Central Committee cell (since it comes from Stalin's secretariat, it passes instantly). Poskrebyshchev turns out to be extremely obedient as the secretary of the cell and even runs to Kanner too often for

directives. But the mischief of Stalin's secretaries plays once again a decisive role in Poskrebyshchev's career. In 1926, Stanislav Kossior became the fourth secretary of the Central Committee (at this time the number of secretaries increased to five). Usually the displaced nobleman pulls a long tail of people whom he trusts, "his guys." Kossior wants to show that he does not have any group of his own and does not want to create, and when they ask him whom he wants to have as his assistant, he modestly answers that he has no candidacy and he would prefer that someone be pointed out to him by Stalin's secretariat; Kossior is small and bald, Poskrebyshchev is small and bald; they make a rather comical couple. That is why Kanner, choking with laughter, offers Poskrebyshchev, secretary of the cell, as an assistant to Kossior. What is being done.

This is how the career of Stalin's future secretary was created. From the secretariat of Kossior, he will move in 1928 to Tovstukha's assistants, after Tovstukha's death in 1935 he will take his place - Stalin's assistant and head of the Special Sector, and for eighteen years he will be Stalin's faithful batman, before whom ministers and members of the Politburo will tremble. True, he will have the imprudence to marry the sister of Sedov's wife (Trotsky's son). But when his wife is arrested in 1937 on the orders of the suspicious Stalin, he will not bat an eyelid and will continue to stay under Stalin until 1953. Only a few months before Stalin's death, he will be eliminated and will wait in awe for his execution. What kind of execution Stalin still will not carry out.

Chapter 6

TOVSTUKHA AND THE LENIN INSTITUTE. DEATH OF LENIN. REGROUPING. ANOTHER BREAK ON REVVOENSKOVET. SKLYANSKY. THE SVERDLOV FAMILY. DIAMOND FUND OF THE POLITBURO. CONTROL OVER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS OF THE POLITBURO. HIGH COUNCIL OF PHYSICAL CULTURE.

Throughout the second half of 1923, Stalin's secretary Tovstukha was performing another "dark" task entrusted to him by Stalin. In the struggle for power of Stalin, this matter has considerable importance.

Lenin is dying. The struggle for the inheritance is going on between the troika and Trotsky. The troika conducts energetic propaganda in the party, presenting itself as Lenin's faithful and best disciples. And from Lenin, official propaganda creates an icon - a brilliant leader, to whom the party owes everything, and what he wrote is the Gospel, the true truth. In fact, what only did not have to write to Lenin. And quotes from it can support anything. But for Stalin, one part of what Lenin wrote is of particular importance. Both during the pre-revolutionary emigre squabbles, and during the revolution and civil war, Lenin had to make sharp statements about certain prominent Bolsheviks, and, of course, not so much in printed articles as in personal letters, notes, and after the revolution in government practice during any resolutions on papers and business notes. The era is coming when it will be possible to extract from old folders Lenin's sharp condemnation of some prominent party member and, having published it, deal a mortal blow to his career: "You see what Ilyich thought of him." And you can take a lot. And not only from what Lenin wrote, but also from what opponents wrote about him in the heat of a dispute. Suffice it to recall the pre-revolutionary polemic between Lenin and Trotsky, when Lenin accused Trotsky of all mortal sins, and Trotsky wrote about Lenin with indignation as a professional exploiter of the backwardness of the masses and as a dishonest intriguer. And what is not in all sorts of personal notes of Lenin to members of the government elite and his employees. If you collect all this, what a weapon in the hands of Stalin!

The Troika is discussing how to do this, of course, in my presence. But I clearly see that Zinoviev and Kamenev are short-sightedly thinking only about the fight against Trotsky and his supporters, while Stalin keeps quiet and thinks about a much wider use of

Lenin's dynamite. It was decided to inspire Ryazanov in a roundabout way so that he would make the necessary proposal to the Politburo. Ryazanov, an old Party member, is regarded in the Party as an outstanding theorist of Marxism, directs the Institute of Marx and Engels, and delves enthusiastically into Marx's letters and manuscripts. Indeed, it is with sincere pleasure that he proposes to the Politburo that the Institute of Marx and Engels be turned into the Institute of Marx, Engels and Lenin. The Politburo agrees in principle, but considers it necessary first to create a special Lenin Institute, which would be devoted to the work of Lenin and the collection of all materials about him for several years, and only then to unite both institutions. By the way, the Politburo decides that it is necessary to get down to business immediately, and on November 26, 1923, decides that the Lenin Institute should be a single repository of all Lenin's "manuscript materials", and in the order of party discipline, under the threat of party sanctions, obliges all party members who keep in their personal or institutional archives any notes, letters, resolutions and other materials written by Lenin's hand, hand them over to the Lenin Institute.

The decision of the Politburo has a good camouflage - the decision was made at the initiative of Ryazanov; the members of the Central Committee, having received the protocol of the Politburo, will consider

that it is a matter of studying the work of Lenin. Tovstukha is the assistant director of the Lenin Institute. He has long been rummaging through the archives of the Politburo, extracting Lenin's notes and sorting them. Now he will have a whole stream of materials that he will sort for Stalin's needs; Lenin's notes, unfavorable to Stalin, will disappear forever; disadvantageous to everyone else will be carefully collected, sorted by name. At the request of Stalin regarding any prominent party member, an abusive Leninist note will be presented to Stalin at any moment, if necessary. On January 14-15, 1924, at the plenum of

the Central Committee, the results of the party discussion are summed up - the troika notes with satisfaction that the opposition has been defeated. You can take the next step in the fight against Trotsky. But these steps are being taken gradually and carefully. Individual members of the Central Committee make statements to the Central Committee that things are not going well in the Red Army. The plenum creates a "military commission of the Central Committee" "for examining the situation in the Red Army." Chairman - Gusev. The selection of the composition of the commission is such that its conclusions in advance are clear: it includes Unshlikht,

and Voroshilov, and Frunze, and the humble Andreev and Shvernik. Immediately after the plenum (January 16-18), the 13th Party Conference of Apparatchiks (the conference is made up of leading workers of local Party organizations), on the basis of Stalin's report, calls for the vigilance of Party bureaucrats, pointing out that "the opposition, headed by Trotsky, wants to break the Party apparatus,"

and demands ending all discussion. A few days later, on January 21, Lenin dies. In the turmoil of the following days, a number of interesting observations can be made. Stalin is true to himself. He sends Trotsky (who is being treated in the Caucasus) a telegram with a false indication of the day of Lenin's funeral, so that Trotsky is forced to conclude that he cannot be in time for the funeral. And he remains in the Caucasus. Therefore, at the funeral, the troika looks like the heirs of Lenin (and Trotsky, they say, did not even consider it necessary to come) and monopolizes solemn and devoted speeches.

In the country, the attitude towards the death of Lenin is ambivalent. Part of the population is satisfied, although they try to hide it. For her, Lenin is the author of communism; died, and that's where he belongs. Another part of the population believes that Lenin is better than others, because, having seen the collapse of communism, he hastened to return some elements of normal life (NEP), which led to the fact that you can somehow eat and live. On the contrary, the greater part of the party is shaken, especially the rank and file. Lenin is a recognized leader and leader. Confusion - how will it be without him now? At the top of the party, the attitude is different. There are people who are sincerely shocked, like Bukharin or Lenin's deputy Tsyurupa, who were strongly attached to Lenin. Kamenev is a little worried about the death of Lenin - he is not alien to human traits. But Stalin makes a heavy impression on me. In his heart, he is extremely happy about the death of Lenin - Lenin was one of the main obstacles on the road to power. In his office and in the presence of secretaries, he is in a great mood, beaming. At meetings and meetings, he makes a tragically mournful face, speaks false speeches, swears loyalty to Lenin with pathos. Looking at him, I

involuntarily I think: "What a scoundrel you are." He still knows nothing about Lenin's "letter to the congress" bomb. Krupskaya carries out the will of Lenin to the letter. This letter is for the congress; the congress will be in May, then she will open the envelope and give Lenin's will to the Politburo. Kamenev already knows something about the will from Fotieva, who continues to work as secretary of the Council of People's Commissars, but silent.

In connection with the death of Lenin and the turmoil associated with it, the plenums of the Central Committee follow one after another. The first January plenum of the Central Committee is followed by an emergency plenum after Lenin's death, then another in January; just at the beginning of January, all the appointments and reappointments of the allied people's commissars were made, and the redistribution of important places is already taking place again. Who should be appointed chairman of the Council of People's Commissars to replace Lenin? There is no agreement either in the Politburo or even in the troika. The members of the troika are afraid that if one of them is appointed, this will be an indication for the country that he will finally inherit Lenin - like the 1st regime, and this does not suit the rest of the troika. In the end, they agree on the candidacy of Rykov: politically he is a pale figure, and his post of head of government will be more decorative than real (like Kalinin, chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, formally something like the president of the republic, but in reality - nothing). Prior to that, Rykov was

chairman of the Supreme Council of the National Economy. But in connection with the creation of the USSR, the STO - the Council of Labor and Defense - is being reorganized. It is headed by Kamenev, and in fact the leadership of all economic people's commissariats (VSNKh, Gosplan, NKFin, NKTorg, NKZem, etc.) is transferred to the STO; this still limits the importance of Rykov's post of chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. The GPU is being reorganized, turning into the OGPU with power over Formally, it is headed by Dzerzhinsky, but since he is simultaneously appointed chairman of the Supreme Council of National Economy instead of Rykov, in practice the leadership of the OGPU passes not even to his first deputy Menzhinsky, but to his second deputy Yagoda,

who has already established close ties with the Stalinist secretariat, but not with me). The new plenum of the Central Committee on February 3 discusses the issue of convening the next congress, but most importantly, hears the report of the "military commission of the Central Committee" and after sharp criticism directed outwardly against the military people's commissariat, but in essence against Trotsky, decides

to "recognize that in its present form the Red Army incompetent" and that it is necessary to carry out military reform. Finally, in early March, a new plenum deals a new blow to Trotsky: Trotsky's deputy Sklyansky (whom Stalin hates) is removed; the new composition of the Revolutionary Military Council was approved; Trotsky was still left as chairman, but Frunze was appointed his deputy; he was also appointed to the post of chief of staff of the Red Army. Trotsky's enemies entered the Revolutionary Military Council in a wave: Voroshilov, Unshlikht, Bubnov, and even Budyonny. The decorative post of the specialist commander in o

At the troika, the question of what to do with Sklyansky is being discussed. For some reason, Stalin proposes to send him to America as chairman of Amtorg. This is a big post. There are no diplomatic relations with America. There is no embassy or trade mission there. There is Amtorg - a trading mission that trades. In fact, it replaces and performs the functions of an embassy, a trade mission, and a base for all the underground work of the Comintern and the GPU. Its trading functions are also important. Until recently, after the Civil War, it was possible to restore the completely destroyed railway transport only by the timely purchase of a large batch of steam locomotives in America, which was carried out by a special trade mission, headed by Professor Lomonosov; all these purchases are possible only thanks to the support of strong financial Jewish groups that are favorable to the Soviet revolution. It takes a lot of diplomacy and skill.

I'm not the only one surprised by Stalin's proposal. Stalin hates Sklyansky (who throughout the civil war pursued and clucked Stalin) more than Trotsky. But Zinoviev cannot stand him either.

I remember how a little earlier at a meeting of the Politburo, when Sklyansky was discussed, Zinoviev made a contemptuous face and said: "There is nothing more comical than these shtetl externs who imagine themselves to be great commanders." The blow was dealt not only to Sklyansky, but also to Trotsky. Trotsky flared up, but restrained himself, cast a sharp glance at

Zinoviev said nothing.

Sklyansky was appointed chairman of Amtorg and left for America. When soon after that a telegram arrived that he, while walking in a motor boat on the lake, became a victim of an accident and drowned, the extreme uncertainty of the situation of this accident caught my eye: he went out to ride in a motor boat, did not return for a long time, went on searches, found boat overturned, and he drowned. There were no witnesses to the accident.

Mehlis and I immediately went to Kanner and unanimously declared: "Grisha, did you drown Sklyansky?" Kanner defended himself weakly: "Well, of course I did. Wherever anything happens, it's always me." We insisted, Kanner denied. In the end, I said: "You know, as Secretary of the Politburo, I'm supposed to know everything." To which Kanner replied: "Well, there are things that it is better not to know even the secretary of the Politburo." Although he didn't confess in general (after the story with Yuzhak, everyone in Stalin's secretariat became much more cautious), Mehlis and I were firmly convinced that Sklyansky was drowned on Stalin's orders and that the "accident" was organized by Kanner and Yagoda.

I meet the Sverdlov family. This is a very interesting family. Old Sverdlov is already dead. He lived in Nizhny Novgorod and was an engraver. He was very revolutionary, associated with all sorts of revolutionary organizations, and his work as an engraver consisted mainly in the manufacture of false seals, with the help of which the revolutionary underground fabricated false documents for themselves. The atmosphere in the house was revolutionary. But the eldest son Zinovy, as a result of some complex mental processes, came to a deep internal crisis, broke with revolutionary circles, and with his family, and with Judaism. His father cursed him with a solemn Jewish ritual curse. He was adopted by Maxim Gorky, and Zinovy became Zinovy Peshkov. But, continuing his spiritual path, he also moved away from Gorky's revolutionary entourage, went to France and entered the Foreign Legion for a complete break with his past life. When, after some time, the news came that he had lost his hand in battles, old Sverdlov became terribly excited: "Which hand?" must lose his right hand. Zinovy Peshkov became a French citizen, continued to serve in the army and reached the rank of full general. He completely abandoned his family. When I, having arrived in France, wanted to tell him the news about his two brothers and sister, who lived in Russia, he replied that they were not his family and that he did not want to know anything about them.

The second brother, Yakov, was in the party of Lenin, a prominent member of the Bolshevik Central Committee. After the October Revolution, he became the right hand of Lenin and the chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, that is, the formal head of the Soviet republic. His main work was organizational and distributive: he replaced with himself what later became the party apparatus in the party, and especially its organizational distribution. But in March 1919 he died of tuberculosis.

The millionth city, the capital of the Urals, Sverdlovsk, is named after him. For some reason, when Stalin came to power, this City was not renamed, although, as we will see now, Stalin had some personal reasons not to like Sverdlov, and Stalin never forgets such reasons. Perhaps because Yekaterinburg continues to bear the name of Sverdlov, because the royal family was killed in this city in July 1918, and that the share of responsibility for this murder fell on Yakov Sverdlov, the official head of the Soviet government, who, on behalf of Lenin, cunningly avoided formal responsibility, informed local Ural Bolshevik authorities, which transfers the issue of the fate of the royal family to their decision. The third brother, Veniamin Mikhailovich, did not have a penchant for revolutionary activities, he preferred to emigrate to

America and became the owner of a small bank there. But when the Bolshevik revolution took place in Russia, Yakov hastily requested a brother. Benjamin liquidated his bank and came to Petrograd. At that time, Lenin, who was still in captivity of demagogic and delusional ideas, which said, for example, that "every cook should be able to manage the state," applied them to life, making ridiculous propaganda appointments. As you know, ensign Krylenko was appointed in defiance of the bourgeoisie by the Commander-in-Chief (Supreme Commander-in-Chief), some kind of semi-literate

a sailor - the director of the State Bank, and also a not very literate machinist Emshanov - the Minister of Railways (Narkomput). Poor Yemshanov did such nonsense in his ministry and got so confused that after a month or two he tearfully begged that Lenin would free him from back-breaking work. Then Yakov Sverdlov proposed to Lenin for this post his newly arrived brother, by the way, not a communist. He was appointed People's Commissar of Railways. After some time, he became convinced that he could do nothing in this post (then Trotsky and Dzerzhinsky were just as unsuccessful in this post), and preferred to become members of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council. In the future, his career slowly but surely went down. However, he managed to remain non-partisan, and after the death of his brother, one can only be surprised that it did not collapse immediately. During these times (1923 - 1924 - 1925) he was still a member of the Supreme Economic Council and was in charge of its scientific and technical department.

Shortly before the war, a very young (I think she was seventeen years old) but very talented actress Vera Alexandrovna Delevskaya entered the Moscow Art Theater. She was also very beautiful.

Due to lack of experience, she had not yet reached major roles, but she was absolutely passionate about the Art Theater, she lived by it and breathed only it. And the Art Theater was the theater not only of Chekhov, but also of Gorky. And around Gorky all the time revolved some extremely revolutionary public. And when one of the theater comrades asked an inexperienced girl to provide a service - to hide some revolutionary literature, it was inconvenient for her to refuse, but she did not understand anything in this matter. She did it so ineptly that the police immediately discovered everything; she was arrested and sent into exile. It is known that the tsarist police, sending revolutionaries into exile, provided them with a constant salary that paid for their board, apartment and other expenses; they had to do nothing and continue to engage in revolutionary activities. Actually, they lived freely, but under the supervision of the police; there was almost no supervision, and it was very easy to leave exile, but then you had to go underground, which was associated with some inconveniences (however, I don't quite understand what kind, because in the event of being caught and re-arrested, the escapee was sent back to link and without extending the term). But the tsarist police extended their concern for the exiles so far that in exile they were grouped according to party affiliation, the Mensheviks were sent to one place, the Bolsheviks were grouped in another, etc. This extremely helped the exiled to live a friendly party life, spend time in meetings and disputes about the program and tactics, writing articles for the party press and discussing them, and so on.

In the place where Vera Alexandrovna was exiled, prominent Bolsheviks were grouped (it seems that the revolutionary literature that she so kindly hid was Bolshevik), including three members of the Central Committee: Spandaryan, Stalin and Yakov Sverdlov. Both Stalin and Sverdlov, carried away by the young and beautiful actress, took care of her with all their might. Vera Alexandrovna did not hesitate to reject the gloomy, unsympathetic and uncultured Stalin and preferred the cultured and European-educated Sverdlov.

Upon returning from exile, Yakov Sverdlov returned to his family (he had a wife, Claudia Novgorodtseva, and son Andrei) and to his new high state functions, and Vera Alexandrovna moved, so to speak, to a single position. But when Veniamin Sverdlov saw her, he was immediately captivated by her, and they got married. Their marriage union continued during my acquaintance with them.

The fourth brother, German Mikhailovich, was, in fact, his half-brother: after the death of his first wife, the old man Sverdlov married the Russian Kormiltseva, and German was their son. He was much younger (he was nineteen in 1923), did not take part in the revolution, was still a member of the Komsomol, an extremely intelligent and witty boy. I was four years older than him. He became very attached to me, constantly visited me and was very friendly with me. About my internal evolution (when I gradually became an anti-communist) he had no idea. However, we talked about everything except politics.

The four Sverdlov brothers had a sister. She married a rich man, Averbakh, who lived somewhere in the south of Russia. The Averbakhovs had a son and a daughter. Son Leopold, a very lively and impudent young man, discovered in himself a vocation to lead Russian literature and one

time, through a group of "napostovtsy", he exercised firm KGB control in literary circles. And at the same time, he relied mainly on family ties - his sister Ida married the notorious Heinrich Yagoda, head of the GPU.

Yagoda in his career also owed a lot to the Sverdlov family. The fact is that Yagoda was not at all a pharmacist, as the rumors that he spread about himself were, but an apprentice in the engraving workshop of the old man Sverdlov. True, after a certain period of work, Yagoda decided that the time had come to settle himself. He stole the entire set of tools and escaped with it, correctly counting that the old man Sverdlov would prefer not to go to the police so that his underground activities would not come out into the light of God. But Yagoda failed to settle at his own expense, and after a while he came to Sverdlov with a confession. The old man forgave him and took him to work. But after a while, Yagoda, discovering the constancy of ideas, again stole all the tools and fled.

After the revolution, all this was forgotten, Yagoda captured Ida, the niece of the head of state, and this greatly helped his career - he became a member of the Kremlin circles. The

widow of Yakov Sverdlov, Klavdia Novgorodtseva, lived a completely inconspicuous life, did not work anywhere.

Once Herman Sverdlov comes to me and, among other things, tells: Andrey (the son of Yakov Sverdlov and Claudia Novgorodtseva), who was fifteen years old at that time, became interested in the fact that one drawer in his mother's desk is always closed, and when she has it asked what was in this box, she abruptly cut him off: "Leave me alone, it's none of your business." And somehow, consumed by curiosity and seizing the moment when his mother forgot the keys somewhere in the room for a while, he opened this box. And what was there? A bunch of some kind of fake stones, very similar to large diamonds. But, of course, the stones are fake. How can a mother have such a mass of real diamonds? He closed the drawer again and put the keys back

place.

Herman was of the same opinion - these are some kind of glass. Yakov Sverdlov, it seems, was never a money-grubber, and he did not have any valuables. I agreed with Herman - of course, it's something worthless.

But I realized that there is something completely different here. Even before that, rummaging through the archives of the Politburo, I found that three or four years ago, in 1919-1920, during my acute military crisis, when the Soviet government was hanging by a thread, the "diamond fund of the Politburo" was allocated from the general state diamond fund. ". His appointment was such that, in the event of a loss of power, to provide the members of the Politburo with the means to live and continue their revolutionary activities. There were traces of the relevant orders and allocation from the state diamond fund in the archive, but there was not a single word about where this fund was hidden. There was not even a word in a special folder - in my safe. Obviously, it was decided that only members of the Politburo should know about the location of the fund. Now I suddenly found the key. Indeed, in the event of a loss of power, none of the places of storage was suitable, except to hide this fund with some private person in whom the Politburo had complete confidence, but at the same time not playing the slightest political role and completely invisible. This explained why Claudia Novgorodtseva did not serve anywhere and led an inconspicuous lifestyle, and by the way - and why she did not bear the big name Sverdlov, which would help her in many ways in all the little things in life, and continued to bear her maiden name. Obviously, she was the custodian of the fund (however, I do not think that this then continued for many years, since the fall of Soviet power became more unlikely every year). I must add about the Sverdlovs that Veniamin died in 1937, Leopold Averbakh was shot in 1938, Yagoda, as you know, also in 1938; the fate of Vera Alexandrovna is unknown to me. I will say more about Germany. My position as secretary of the

Politburo was quickly strengthened. At first, Zinoviev and Kamenev looked at me with some distrust: "Stalin's man." But very soon they came to the conclusion that I did not occupy this post by the good will of Stalin, but because I had the necessary

qualities. For the first three or four weeks of my work in the Politburo, I continued the technique adopted at the meeting, when Lenin and then Kamenev formulated resolutions

Politburo and dictated them to the secretary Glasser, and she wrote them down. But soon I decided to repeat my experience with Molotov and the Orgburo and take upon myself the formulation of most of the resolutions. True, when I did this with Molotov, I not only allowed him to gain a lot of time, but also helped him a lot in essence, since he formulated slowly and difficultly. Kamenev was a brilliant chairman, he formulated quickly and accurately, and here it was only a matter of gaining time. I turned to Kamenev and told him: "I am always very well prepared for a meeting, I know perfectly well all the nuances in the proposals of the departments and their significance, as well as the whole history of the issue; therefore, there is no need to always dictate resolutions to me, I can formulate them myself in the sense of the decision taken. Kamenev looked at me with some surprise, and his look said: "You, young man, it seems you are taking too much on yourself." But he didn't answer. At the very first meeting of the Politburo

after this, some complex issue of the national economy was discussed, in which neither the Supreme Council of National Economy, nor the State Planning Committee, nor the People's Commissariat of Finance agreed. After much debate, Kamenev finally declared: "Well, as far as I can see, the Politburo is

leaning towards Rykov's point of view. Let's vote." Indeed, the vote confirmed Rykov's position. Then Kamenev, throwing a quick glance at me, said: "Very well. Let's move on," and moved on to the next item on the agenda. It was in the nature of a difficult exam. I wrote a large and complex resolution on many and different issues of the problem under discussion, as usual, on a cardboard double card and passed it across the table to Stalin. Stalin read it, did not say a word, and passed it on to Kamenev. Kamenev read it carefully, did not make a single correction, and handed the card to me with a certain movement of the eyes, which was supposed to mean "bravo." From that moment on, this new practice proposed by me began, and the Politburo won a lot of time without wasting it on formulations - usually most of the disputes occurred because of the amendments made by the participants to the text established by the chairman. Now, in most cases, the general spirit of the decision was established and adopted, and it was entrusted to formulate it to the secretary (of course, under the control of the chairman; but I must say that almost never, even in the most complex and difficult questions, Kamenev made changes to my text). Of course, I made

my job extremely difficult. After all, I had to deal with the technique of the meeting, supervise the release of those summoned, ensure that the members of the Politburo were provided with the necessary materials), and make sure that the Politburo did not make mistakes, making again decisions that had already been taken before, or vice versa, contrary to recently adopted ones (in such cases I took the floor and reminded the Politburo), and closely follow the debate in order to understand all the nuances, and at the same time formulate a resolution on the issue just passed. Seeing how I cope with this, Zinoviev said: "Comrade Bazhanov, like Julius Caesar, can do five things at the same time." I did not know that Julius Caesar had this ability, but I could not be indifferent to Zinoviev's compliment.

Meanwhile, I soon took another step in my hardware ascent. At a meeting of the troika, I said: "You make a lot of good decisions at the Politburo, but you do not know how these decisions are carried out, and often whether they are carried out. Of course, it is not advisable to create some kind of additional apparatus for monitoring the implementation of the decision - everything in the work of the Politburo is absolutely secret, and it is impossible to increase the circle of people familiar with all these secrets. Meanwhile, there is a simple way to carry out, at least in general terms, this control of all questions discussed at the Politburo. I am well acquainted with both the spirit and the letter of the Politburo resolutions - I write them down and often formulate them. Entrust me with control over the implementation of Politburo resolutions - I will contact the heads of departments who are entrusted with the implementation; No matter how one evaluates the weight of this control, the mere constant reminder to the leaders that there is an eye of the Politburo constantly monitoring the implementation cannot but have a positive impact.

Kamenev and Zinoviev found this quite logical and agreed. Stalin was silent; he perfectly understood that this was going along the line of strengthening his power - his assistant would control the activities of all ministers and members of the Central Committee; this reinforces its significance. At the same time, he looked at me with the same inquisitive look, which, moreover,

said: "Well, you seem to go far."

I carried out control over the execution of Politburo resolutions in the following way. Large notebooks were prepared; the text of each decision of the Politburo was pasted into them on the left, and my notes on the results of the control were on the right. I carried out the work of control on my own and did not report to anyone. I picked up the phone ("turntables") and called the head of the department who was entrusted with the execution.

"Comrade Lunacharsky, says Bazhanov; on such and such date the Politburo issued such and such a decision; please tell me what you have done in pursuance of this decision. And Comrade Lunacharsky had to report like a schoolboy. Due to the peculiarities of the Soviet system, general negligence and confusion, a small part of the decisions was carried out. Comrade Lunacharsky should have explained to me as convincingly as possible that although little has been done, neither he nor his department is to blame for this, but some objective reasons are to blame. By this control, I soon put myself in a special position and even became a kind of threat to everyone, even the most senior

members of the Bolshevik elite. It was a classic example of strength. I could recognize the explanations as satisfactory and stop the matter there, but I could recognize them as unsatisfactory and report this to the troika or the Politburo. And the point was, of course, not that, according to my report, the Politburo would immediately rush to remove the offender, appointments and dismissals occurred for completely different motives of the struggle for power and behind-the-scenes intrigues, but if there was already a tendency to get rid of someone and remove him from a major post he occupies, then such a pretext for this is better than a report by the Secretary of the Politburo with facts and evidence that this dignitary systematically does not comply with the decisions of the Politburo. I then carried on this control throughout my work in the Politburo. I was young and energetic and soon found myself one side area of interest. When I was still secretary of the Organizing Bureau, I was present at the approval by the Organizational Bureau of the composition of the Supreme Council of Physical Culture and some general directives for the

activities of this institution. At the same time, the absurdity of the work of this department caught my eye, but I was still not a big enough cog in the apparatus machine to come out with criticism.

Physical culture was understood as something useful for the health of the working masses and for their training, almost obligatory mass and en masse waving of arms and legs, so to speak, some kind of collective movement for health. This is what they tried to introduce in all sorts of workers' clubs, driving the working people almost by force into these demonstrations. This, of course, did not arouse the slightest interest and was regarded as something no less boring than political literacy lessons, from which one had to flee. Sport, according to the ideas of the theoreticians of this "physical culture", was considered as an unhealthy relic of bourgeois culture, developing individualism and, therefore, hostile to the collectivist principles of proletarian culture. Flies died from the physical education boredom and its High Council eked out a miserable existence.

When I was already the secretary of the Politburo, I once told Stalin that "physical education" is nonsense, which arouses no interest among the workers, and that it is necessary to move on to sports, to competitions, in which the working masses will be completely interested in. The Supreme Council includes a representative of the Central Committee; this is the head of the Agitprop of the Central Committee, who, realizing the worthlessness of the institution, it seems, has never been there. Appoint me as a

representative of the Central Committee, and I will turn things around, pursuing this as the line of the Central Committee from physical education to sports. Stalin agreed - he was used to always agreeing with me on issues that did not interest him at all (and he was only interested in power and the struggle for it). I immediately passed my appointment through the necessary instances of the Central Committee and became the representative of the Central Committee in the Supreme Council, which, unfortunately, retained the term "physical culture".

The Supreme Council was formed according to the situation from representatives of very many departments. Incidentally, Yagoda was also a member of the Supreme Council, as a representative of the GPU. But the work was to be carried out by the Presidium of the Supreme Council. It consisted of five people: the chairman, who was the People's Commissar of Health Semashko; deputy chairman - he was a representative of the military department Mekhonoshin; and three members of the Presidium - me as a representative of the Central Committee of the Party, young doctor Ittin, a representative of the Central Committee of the Komsomol and

representative of the All-Union Central

Council of Trade Unions Senyushkin. The Plenum of the Supreme Council was convened, and I delivered a report on the change in the policy of the Council - the development of sports and the interest of the working masses connected with this. To begin with, it was necessary to restore the old sports organizations destroyed by the revolution and closed, to gather dispersed athletes in them and use them as instructors and inspirers of sports activities.

Then retract the working masses. Yagoda immediately raised objections. Before the revolution, sports were practiced mainly by representatives of the bourgeois class; sports organizations have been and will be a collection of counter-revolutionaries; to give them the opportunity to gather and unite is dangerous. And any sport is against collectivist principles.

I took the fight, pointing out that the new line given by the Central Committee accepts the principle of competition, without which it is impossible to arouse interest and draw the working people into the cause. As for the old athletes, their political tendencies are not interesting in this case: you can't breed any counter-revolution in football or the 100 meters. In addition, the policy of the party has always been aimed at the use of specialists, engineers and technicians - the overwhelming majority come from the bourgeois class, meanwhile they are widely used in the national economy, and even the Red Army could be created and won only through the involvement and use of the military. specialists - old tsarist officers, politically often very distant and even hostile. The Soviet agreed entirely with my point of view (by the way, this was the "line of the Central Committee"). When Yagoda was

still trying to say that sports clubs would be nests of counter-revolution and that they should be watched in both directions, Semashko interrupted him: "Well, this is the business of your department, it's not us

touches."

Things moved quickly, the clubs grew, the masses enthusiastically took a great interest in sports. In the summer of 1924, the first All-Russian Olympiad (in athletics) was held, which was a great success. I was its chief judge and very intensively involved in all this. The GPU caused us great difficulties - for him all the old athletes were enemies. I had to wage war with him, protecting individual athletes who did not have a special love for communism. Some had to be pulled out of the mouth of the GPU with their teeth. Anatoly Anatolyevich Pereselenetsev was the best rower in Russia; in 1911-1912 he won the European championship in singles. He was "a native of the bourgeois classes." The GPU could not stand him and tried to arrest him. He was saved only by my intercession and the threat to raise a question about him in the Central Committee if the GPU touched him or tried to create some kind of fictitious case against him. Until 1927, Pereselenetsev lived under my protection, he knew this and thanked me. In 1927, when I was about to flee abroad, I saw him at a sports club and told him that I was going to work in the provinces, and since there would be no one to protect him, the GPU would immediately eat him up; Therefore, I advise him to give up everything, stop being an eyesore to the GPU, and hide somewhere in a remote, remote province. He promised to follow my advice. I do not know whether he fulfilled it and what his fate is. Soon, members of the Bolshevik elite also

began to engage in sports (more for health). True, neither Stalin nor Molotov ever paid any tribute to sports. But Kaganovich went skiing in the winter, and with Sokolnikov, who at that time was the People's Commissar for Finance, and with the head of the budget department of the Narkomfin, Reingold, we formed a frequent game of tennis; Sokolnikov's wife, Galina Serebryakova, also sometimes took part in it (Sokolnikov would be shot in 1941 in the Oryol prison, Reingold was shot back in 1936-1937, and Galina Serebryakova was exiled to Soviet hard labor - to a concentration camp, after a long stay there, after Stalin's death returned and, apparently, "for the sake of fear" wrote a bad book about her experience).

Chapter 7

*LENIN'S TESTAMENT. MY CAREER. I BECOMING AN ANTI-COMMUNISM. GENUINE
LENIN. DOGMATICS AND PRACTICES OF COMMUNISM,*

MARXISM. EVERYTHING IMPREGNATED LIE.

Meanwhile, the 13th Party Congress was approaching. A few days before its opening, the methodical Krupskaya opened Lenin's package and sent Lenin's bomb ("testament") to the Central Committee. When Mekhlis reported to Stalin the contents of Lenin's letter (which Lenin advised Stalin to remove), Stalin cursed Krupskaya with the last words and rushed to confer with Zinoviev and Kamenev. At this time, Stalin still really

needed the troika - first it was necessary to finish off Trotsky. But now it turned out that the alliance with Zinoviev and Kamenev was also salutary for Stalin himself. Of course, even before this, the troika had agreed that at the congress Zinoviev would again read the political report of the Central Committee and thus look like the leader of the party; even, in order to emphasize its weight and significance, the troika decided to convene the next, XIV Congress, in his fiefdom - Leningrad (later, with the rupture of the troika, this decision was canceled). But now, in connection with Lenin's will, the main thing was the agreement of Zinoviev and Kamenev that Stalin should remain the general secretary of the party. With amazing naivete, believing that now there was nothing to fear from Stalin, since Lenin's will would further reduce his weight in the party, they agreed to save him. The day before the congress, on May 1, 1924, an emergency plenum of the Central Committee was convened specifically to read Lenin's will.

The plenum took place in the meeting room of the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. On a small, low platform, Kamenev was sitting at the chairman's table, and Zinoviev was sitting next to him. There was a table nearby on the stage, at which I was sitting (as always, I was secretary at the plenum of the Central Committee). The members of the Central Committee sat in rows on chairs, facing the stage. Trotsky sat in the third row at the edge of the middle aisle, with Pyatakov and Radek beside him. Stalin sat down on the right side of the platform, facing the window and the platform, so that the members

of the Central Committee could not see his face, but I could observe him very well all the time. Kamenev opened the meeting and read Lenin's letter. Silence reigned. Stalin's face became gloomy and tense. According to a

predetermined scenario, Zinoviev immediately took the floor. "Comrades, you all know that the posthumous will of Ilyich, every word of Ilyich is law for us. More than once we swore to fulfill what Ilyich bequeathed to us. And you know perfectly well that we will fulfill this oath. But there is one point on which we are happy to state that Ilyich's fears were not justified. We have all been witnesses of our common work during the last months, and, like me, you could see with satisfaction that what Ilyich feared did not happen. I am talking about our general secretary and the dangers of a split in the Central Committee" (I convey the meaning of

the speech). Of course, this was not true. The members of the Central Committee knew perfectly well that there was a split in the Central Committee. Everyone was silent. Zinoviev proposed to re-elect Stalin as General Secretary. Trotsky, too, was silent, but with energetic facial expressions portrayed his extreme co

Kamenev, for his part, urged the members of the Central Committee to leave Stalin as General Secretary. Stalin was still looking out the window with clenched jaws and a tense face. His fate was being decided. Since everyone was

silent, Kamenev proposed to resolve the issue by voting. Who is in favor of leaving Comrade Stalin as General Secretary of the Central Committee? Who is against? Who abstained? They voted by a show of hands. I walked up and down the rows and counted the votes, telling Kamenev only the overall result. The majority voted for leaving Stalin, against - a small group of Trotsky, but there were a few abstentions (busy counting hands, I didn't even notice who exactly; I really regret this).

Zinoviev and Kamenev won (if they knew that they managed to secure a bullet in their own back of the head!). A year and a

half later, when Stalin removed Zinoviev and Kamenev from power, Zinoviev, recalling this meeting of the Plenum and how he and Kamenev managed to save Stalin from falling into political oblivion, said bitterly: "Does Comrade Stalin know what gratitude is?" Comrade Stalin took his pipe out of his mouth and replied: "Well, I know, I know very well, it's such a dog's disease."

Stalin remained General Secretary. The plenum, in addition, decided not to make Lenin's testament public at the congress and not to communicate its text to the congress delegates, but to instruct the leaders of the congress delegations to acquaint the delegates with it within the framework of each delegation. This resolution of the Plenum was deliberately vaguely edited, so that it allowed the leaders of the delegations to simply tell the delegates about the essence of Lenin's letter and the decisions of the Plenum, without them being able to properly familiarize themselves with the Lenin text.

The history of communist power in Russia is so full of lies and all kinds of falsifications that it is already completely superfluous when more or less conscientious witnesses (and participants) of events, making mistakes, still confuse the truth of the past. In particular, the history of Lenin's testament is already extremely confused. Meanwhile, Trotsky, in general a reliable witness regarding the facts and dates that took place, for his part, makes a gross mistake in describing the history of the testament. In his book about Stalin, written

by Trotsky in the last months of his life, Trotsky (French text of the book, pages 514 - 515), describing the meeting of the Plenum of the Central Committee at which the "testament" was read out, continues: "In fact, the testament not only failed to put an end to the internal struggle, which Lenin wanted, it intensified it to the highest degree. Stalin could no longer doubt that the return of Lenin to activity would mean the political death of the general secretary.

From these lines, one can only conclude that Lenin was still alive when the will was read out. And since the testament was announced at the pre-Congress plenum, it means that we are talking about the plenum of the Central Committee on April 15, 1923 and the XII Congress, held on April 17-25, 1923. Meanwhile, this is a gross mistake. The testament was read at the pre-Congress emergency plenum on May 21, 1924 (the XIII Congress took place on May 22-31, 1924), that is, four months after Lenin's death. It is easy to conclude that Trotsky is mistaken, and not I, from the following: describing the plenum and the announcement of the will, Trotsky in the same book refers to me as a witness and cites my description: "Bazhanov, another former secretary of Stalin, described the meeting of the Central Committee, at which Kamenev read the testament: "Extreme awkwardness paralyzed those present. Stalin, sitting on the step of the stage, felt small and miserable. I looked at him attentively..." etc. From these texts – by Trotsky and mine, which Trotsky quotes, it is clear that both Trotsky and I were present at this plenum, I – as the secretary of the session. But I did attend the plenum of the Central Committee on May 21, 1924 - at that time I was the secretary of the Politburo. And I could not attend the April plenum of the Central Committee in 1923 - at that time I was not yet the secretary of the Politburo. Consequently, there is no doubt that the announcement of the will took place at the plenum of the Central Committee on May 21, 1924, after the death of Lenin, and Trotsky is mistaken. At the congress, Zinoviev read the political report of the Central Committee. In the very last days

before the congress, he asked me to make an analysis of the work of the Politburo for the past year, so that he could use it for his report. I did this by sorting thousands of Politburo resolutions into different categories and bringing all this to some conclusions (but all this was very conditional and relative). Zinoviev used my work in the report, but right there in the report he gave my last name three times, referring to me and thanking me for the work I had done. It had an ulterior purpose that I understood well.

I have reached some very high point in my career. I have already said that in the first days of my work with Stalin I went to him all the time for directives. I soon became convinced that there was absolutely no need to do this - all this did not interest him. "What do you think should be done? So? Yeah, well, do it." I got used to it very quickly, I saw that it was possible to do very well without disturbing him in vain, and I began to show all kinds of initiative. But the fact is that the heads of departments - all members of the government - were forced to turn to Stalin or the Politburo all the time in order to raise questions, agree on them, etc. They soon got used to the fact that turning to Stalin personally was hopeless. Stalin was not interested in all these state affairs, he didn't understand much about them, he didn't deal with them, and he couldn't give anything but purely formal answers. If he was asked about the course of solving a problem, he answered indifferently: "Well, then, bring in a question - we will discuss it at

Politburo."

Having begun to supervise the implementation of Politburo resolutions and being in constant contact (through the famous "turntable") with all the heads of departments on their problems, I very quickly accustomed them to the fact that there is a Politburo secretary who is aware of all their affairs, and that it is much better to turn to him, because you can also get information from him about the state of this or that issue, and what are the opinions and tendencies on this issue in the Politburo, and what is best done on this issue. I gradually got to the point where, in essence, I was doing what Stalin was supposed to do - pointing out to the heads of departments that the issue was not sufficiently coordinated with other departments, that instead of submitting it to the Politburo in vain, one must first do this and that. In other words, he gave practical advice that saved time and work, and not only in form, but also in the essence of the movement of any state affairs. They contacted me more and more often. In the end, I saw that I was clearly exceeding my authority and doing what, in essence, the Secretary General of the Central Committee should have done. Then I went to Stalin and told him that, it seems, I had gone too far, I was taking on too much and, in essence, doing his job. Stalin replied to this that the institute of assistant secretaries of the Central Committee was created precisely for this purpose, according to Lenin's idea, in order to relieve the secretaries of the Central Committee from secondary matters, so that they could concentrate their work on the main thing. I objected that the fact of the matter was that I was not dealing with secondary issues at all, but with the most important ones (of course, I understood that for Stalin state affairs were not at all the most important; the most important thing for him was the struggle for power, intrigues and eavesdropping on conversations rivals and opponents). Stalin answered me: "You are doing very well, continue."

As a result of all this, my career began to take on some strange dimensions (it should not be forgotten that I was only twenty-four years old). The crowning achievement of all was that Zinoviev and Kamenev remembered Lenin's initiative: "We, comrades, are fifty years old, you, comrades, are forty years old, we need to prepare a change of leadership: thirty and twenty years old." At one time, two thirty-year-olds were chosen: Kaganovich and Mikhailov (I have already spoken about this). Now we decided that it was time to choose two "twenty-year-olds." These two turned out to be Lazar Shatskin and me. Of course, nothing was officially told to us, but thanks to the benevolent information of the Zinoviev secretaries, Shatskin found out about this, and I also found out from the Kamenev secretaries of Music and Babakhan. The fact that Zinoviev mentioned my name three times in the most important political document of the year - the political report of the Central Committee at the congress - acquired a new meaning. Shatskin

and I, we tried to get to know each other better. Shatskin was a very intelligent, cultured and capable young man from an extremely bourgeois Jewish family. It was he who invented the Komsomol and was its creator and organizer. At first he was the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Komsomol, but then, copying Lenin, who did not officially head the party, Shatskin, hiding behind the scenes of the leadership of the Komsomol, led him for a number of years with his lieutenant Tarkhanov. Shatskin was a member of the bureau of the Central Committee of the Komsomol, and formally at the head of the Komsomol were the secretaries of the Central Committee, whom Shatskin selected from Komsomol members who were not very brilliant. Now (1924), Shatskin has already left the Komsomol for years and went to study at the Institute of Red Professors. During the years of Yezhov's purge (1937 - 1938), he was shot; before the execution he worked in the Comintern.

All this brilliant career of mine, instead of satisfying me, led me into great embarrassment. The fact is that in this year of work in the Politburo I experienced a great, rapid and profound evolution, in which I had already reached the end - from a communist I became a staunch opponent of communism.

The communist revolution represents a gigantic upheaval. The possessing and ruling classes are deprived of power and expelled, huge wealth is taken from them, they are subjected to physical extermination. The entire economy of the country passes into new hands. What is all this for? When I was nineteen years old

and I joined the Communist Party, for me, as for tens of thousands of the same idealistic youths, there was no doubt: this was done for the good of the people. It couldn't be otherwise. To admit that some group of professional revolutionaries passes through this sea of victims and blood in order to

seize all the wealth of the country, use it and enjoy power, and that this is the goal of the social revolution - such an idea seemed to us blasphemous. For a social revolution that leads to the good of the people, we were ready to risk our lives and, if necessary, sacrifice them.

True, during all these colossal changes brought about by the revolution during the civil war, and the reshaping of the entire order of life, we have seen quite often that things are happening that are deeply alien and even hostile to us. We explained this by the inevitable costs of the revolution: "they cut down the forest - the chips fly"; the people are illiterate, wild and uncultured; excesses are very difficult to avoid. And condemning a lot, we were deprived of the opportunity to correct what we condemned - it did not depend on us. For example, all of Ukraine was full of ominous rumors about the cruel Red Terror, when KGB executioners, often sadists and cocaine addicts, exterminated thousands of victims in the most brutal way. I thought that this was a rampage of local bastards, criminals who fell into the organs of reprisal and widely used their terrible power, and the center of the revolution had nothing to do with it and even, probably, did not even imagine what was happening in the localities

in the name of revolution. When I got to the Central Committee, I became close to the center of all information - here I will receive correct and final answers to all those questions that the grassroots communist could not get a meaningful answer. Already in the Orgburo, I became closer to the center of events and understood many things, for example, that a group of party apparatchiks led by Stalin, Molotov, and Kaganovich are doing energetic and systematic work to place their people in order to seize the central organs of the party, and therefore power, into their own hands, but that was only part of the problem - the struggle for power. And I needed a general answer to the most important question: is everything really being done for the good of the people?

Having become the secretary of the Politburo, I finally got the opportunity to have the right answer. These few people who ruled everything, who made a revolution yesterday and continue it today, for what and how did they make it and are doing it? During the year, I observed and analyzed their motives, their goals and methods with extreme care. Of course, the most interesting thing would be to start with Lenin, the founder of the Bolshevik revolution, to get to know and study him himself. Alas, when I came to the Politburo, Lenin was already paralyzed and practically did not exist. But he was still in the center of everyone's attention, and I could learn a lot about him from the people who had worked with him over the past years, as well as from all the secret Politburo materials that I had in my hands. I could easily reject the false and hypocritical glorification of the "genius" Lenin, which was done by the ruling group in order to turn Lenin into an icon and rule over his name as his faithful disciples and heirs. In addition, it was not difficult - I saw through and through the fake Stalin, who swore allegiance to the brilliant teacher in all public speeches, but in fact sincerely hated Lenin, because Lenin became for him the main obstacle to achieving power. In his secretariat, Stalin was not shy, and from some of his phrases, catchphrases and intonations, I clearly saw how he really relates to Lenin. However, others understood this, for example, Krupskaya, who a little later (in 1926) said: "If Volodya had lived, he would now be in prison" Trotsky's testimony, his book about Stalin, French. text, p. 523). Of course, "what would happen if" always refers to the realm of fantasy, but I have thought many times about what would have been the fate of Lenin if he had died ten years

later. Here, of course, everything would depend on whether he would remove Stalin from the political arena in time (that is, in the years 1923-1924). I personally think that Lenin would not have done this. In 1923, Lenin wanted to remove Stalin from the post of General Secretary, but this desire was due to two reasons: firstly, Lenin felt that he was dying, and he was no longer thinking about his leadership, but about his inheritance (and therefore all considerations about his the majority in the Central Committee and the removal of Trotsky); and secondly, Stalin, seeing that Lenin was finished, loosened his belt and began to be rude to both Krupskaya and Lenin. If Lenin were still healthy, Stalin would never have allowed himself such speeches, he would have been an ardent and obedient supporter of Lenin, but he would have secretly created his own apparatus majority and, at the right moment, would have overthrown Lenin, as he did with Zinoviev and Trotsky.

And it's funny to imagine what would happen later, Lenin would be accused of all deviations and mistakes, Leninism would become the same heresy as Trotskyism, it would turn out that Lenin was an agent of, say, German imperialism (which sent him for espionage and other work to Russia in a sealed carriage), but that the revolution nevertheless succeeded thanks to Stalin, who corrected everything in time, exposed and threw out the "traitors and spies" of Lenin and Trotsky in time. And you see, Lenin is no longer the leader of the world revolution, but a dark personality. Is it possible? It is enough to refer to the example of Trotsky, who, as it turns out, was not the central figure of the October Revolution, was not the creator and leader of the Red Army, but was simply a foreign spy. Why would Ilyich? Well, let's say, then Lenin after Stalin's death, maybe, would have been "rehabilitated". Was Trotsky rehabilitated?

When I began to get acquainted with the real materials about the real Lenin, I was struck by his common feature with Stalin: both had a manic thirst for power. Lenin's entire activity is permeated with a red thread by the leitmotif: "come to power at all costs, stay in power at all costs." It can be assumed that Stalin simply strove for power in order to use it in the Genghis Khan style, and did not burden himself with other considerations, for example: "What is this power for?" - while Lenin craved power in order to have in his hands a powerful and indispensable tool for building communism, and tried to keep power in his hands for this. I think this assumption is close to the truth. Personal moments played a lesser role in Lenin's striving for power than in Stalin's, and in any case a different one.

I tried to establish for myself what the moral character of Lenin was, not that "historical", "great" Lenin, as any Marxist propaganda portrays him, but as he really was. According to the most authentic and authentic materials, I had to state that his moral level was very low. Before the revolution, the leader of a small, extremely revolutionary sect, in constant intrigues, squabbling and swearing with other similar sects, in a not very beautiful continuous struggle for cash, handouts from fraternal socialist parties and bourgeois benefactors, mastering a small magazine, expelling and stifling rivals, not disdaining any means, he disgusted Trotsky, by the way, morally more pure and decent. Unfortunately, the morals introduced by Lenin determined the morals of the party elite even after the revolution. I found them both at Zinoviev's and at Stalin's. But the greatness of Lenin? Here I was careful. It is known that when one person kills and robs his victim, he is a criminal. But when one man

manages to rob an entire country and kill ten million people, he is a great and legendary historical figure. And how many insignificant and disgusting megalomaniacs, if they manage to come to power in a big country, become great people, no matter how much harm they bring to their country, and at the same time to other countries.

I rather came to the conclusion that Lenin was a good organizer. The fact that he managed to take power in a large country, on closer examination, says a lot about the weakness of his opponents (the champions of revolutionary devastation), about their ineptitude and lack of political experience, about the general anarchy in which a small group of decently organized Leninist professional revolutionaries turned out to be more skillful. and almost the only organization worth something. I somehow could not find a special Leninist genius in all this.

What did Lenin want? Of course, the implementation of communism. To this, after taking power, Lenin and his party went ahead. It is known that within three or four years this led to a complete disaster. In later party expositions, this is bashfully depicted not as the collapse of the attempt to build a communist society, but as the collapse of "war communism". This, of course, is a common lie and falsification. Communism failed in these years in general. How did Lenin accept this failure? Lenin's official

speeches speak of how Lenin was forced to portray the party's retreat before failure. I was interested in what Lenin really thought about this failure. Of course, Lenin's frank thoughts could only be known to him.

his inner circle, in particular, his two secretaries, Glyasser and Fotieva, with whom he worked all day. I wanted to ask them about what Lenin said about this in frank conversations with them.

It was not so easy at first. At first, for Lenin's secretaries, I was "Stalin's man." Not soon, after several months, constantly colliding with them at work, I made a different impression on them: that I was a "man of the Politburo", and Stalin's assistant was formal. Then I was gradually able to talk to them about Lenin. And finally he was able to raise the question of what Lenin really thought about the NEP, whether he believed that we were facing the collapse of communist theory or not. The secretaries told me that they put the question to Lenin in this way. Lenin answered them: "Of course, we failed. We thought of bringing about a new communist society at the behest of a pike. Meanwhile, this is a matter of decades and generations. In order for the Party not to lose its soul, faith and will to fight, we must portray before it the return to the exchange economy, to capitalism, as some kind of temporary retreat. But for ourselves, we must clearly see that the attempt failed, that it is impossible to suddenly change the psychology of people, the habits of their age-old life. You can try to drive the population into a new system by force, but the question is whether we would have retained power in this all-Russian meat grinder. I always thought about these words of Lenin when,

a few years later, Stalin began to carry out an all-Russian meat grinder, to drive the people into communism by force. It turned out that if you do not stop in front of tens of millions of victims, this can come out. And you can still keep the power. Lenin was stopped by Kronstadt and the Antonov uprising. Stalin did not stop before the Gulag Archipelago. An interesting detail. I wanted to know which books Lenin used the

most. Among these books, Glasser told me, was Gustav Le Bon's *The Psychology of the Crowd*. It remains to be seen whether Lenin used it as an indispensable practical key to influencing the masses, or whether he learned from the remarkable work of Le Bon the understanding that, contrary to the naive theories of Rousseau, it is not at all so easy to change the complex age-old interweaving of the elements of life by decrees of dreamers and dogmatists (why, after all brilliant, revolutions, and the wind always returns "to its full circle").

It was quite clear that Trotsky, like Lenin, was a fanatic of communist dogma (only less flexible). His only goal was also to establish communism. For him, the question of the welfare of the people could only stand as some kind of abstract norm of the distant future, and was it even raised? But here I had to

mentally divide the rulers of Russia into three different groups: the first - Lenin and Trotsky - fanatics of dogma; they dominated in the years 1917-1922, but now they already represented the past. There were two other groups in power and in the struggle for power, not fanatics of dogma, but practitioners of communism. One group - Zinoviev and Kamenev, the other - Stalin and Molotov. For them, communism was the method. Justified by the method of conquest of power and completely continues to justify itself by the method of ruling. The Zinovievs and Kamenevs were practitioners of the use of power; without inventing anything new, they tried to continue Lenin's methods. The Stalins and Molotovs were at the head of the apparatchiks, who gradually seized power in order to use it; as it is now customary to say, groups of "bureaucratic degeneration" or "degeneration" of the party. For both groups, representing the present and future of the party and power, the question of the welfare of the people did not stand in any way, and it was somehow even embarrassing to raise it. Watching them all day in their daily work, I had to bitterly conclude that the good of the people is their last concern. Yes, and communism for them is only a successful method that cannot be abandoned. I had to conclude

that the social revolution (was not made for the people. At best (Lenin and Trotsky) - according to theoretical dogma, in the average case (Zinoviev and Kamenev) - for the enjoyment of the benefits of power by a limited group, at worst (Stalin) - for the almost criminal and naked use of power by immoral invaders.

Let's take the best case. The revolution was made according to Marxist dogma. How does the Politburo itself feel about this dogma? In the very first time of my secretarial work at the Politburo, my ear caught the ironic meaning of the term "educated Marxist." It turned out that when

it was said "an educated Marxist", one should have understood: "a fool and an idler."

It used to be clearer. People's Commissar of Finance Sokolnikov, who is carrying out an on-duty reform, submits for approval to the Politburo the appointment of Professor Yurovsky as a member of the collegium of Narkomfin and head of the currency department. Yurovsky is not a communist, the Politburo does not know him. One of the members of the Politburo asks: "I hope he is not a Marxist?" - "What are you, what are you," Sokolnikov hurries to answer, "the currency department, there you don't need to chat with your tongue, but be able to do business." The Politburo approves Yurovsky without objection.

I try to deepen my knowledge in the field of Marxist theory. What is striking is that the Russian social revolution was carried out contrary to all the theories and predictions of Marx. And in the "capitalist" West, these forecasts are completely refuted by life - instead of the predicted cruel impoverishment of the proletariat, there is a constant and unprecedented rise in the life of the working masses (I recall that according to the famous memorandum of Marshal Boban to Louis XIV at that time, a fifth of the population of France was dying of diseases, not from old age, but from hunger; I compare this with the beginning of the 20th century and the standard of living of workers in the West). And Marx did not see the social revolution in Russia, where 85% of the population were small proprietors - peasants, and the workers were - ridiculous to say, a little more than 1% of the population (in 1921, the population of Soviet Russia at that time was 134.2 million; industrial workers numbered 1,400,000; these figures are taken from the official history of the CPSU, vol. 4, p. 8, published in 1970). To tell the truth, the more I delve into Marxist theory, the more sick of this nonsense, pompously passed off as economics, makes me sick.

You still have to figure it all out. Beginning with Adam Smith, who in the second half of the 18th century, overwhelmed by the best of intentions, tried to find the scientific foundations of economics. The attempt was both premature and vicious. Premature, because the methods of the exact sciences were just being defined and it was too early to try to apply them to such a complex and hard area as the area of economic phenomena; it is vicious, because it was by no means these methods of the exact sciences that Smith applied to the analysis of the studied economic phenomena; but the methodology of modern German idealist philosophy, dialectics, noumena and phenomena, and everything else from which no scientific knowledge of economics could arise. From this philosophical nonsense, Smith gave birth to the theory of labor value, the wrong and crude offspring of German philosophical concepts. How is the price of goods determined? Looking for real causes and effects is not a philosophical approach. Price is phenomenal. This is the cost. It should be dealt with. And it is determined by labor, physical labor, expended on the production of goods ("let me say, sober observers objected, this is not true; here are a thousand examples when this is not so; and a machine that does the same work; and the price of a diamond found without any labor on seashore, etc."). Smith corrected himself: value is determined not by simple labor, but by average socially necessary labor. This theory, which claimed to be scientific and was absolutely false, was remarkable in one respect: it showed how many millions of human lives an unsuccessful product of the human mind can cost. Because the Adam Smith-born bastard has taken on a theoretical life of his own. Ricardo came after Smith and drew all the logical conclusions from Smith's theory: since only physical labor, only the worker creates value, how can capital be formed? It is clear that the capitalist does not pay the worker the full wage for what the worker has produced, but conceals a part (surplus value); the accumulation of this concealed stolen part will create capital. Therefore, Karl Marx proclaimed, every capitalist is a thief and a swindler, and every capital is wealth stolen and stolen from the workers. And the proletarians of all countries must unite in order to take by force what has been stolen from them. At first glance, it is even strange how this nonsense can be considered something scientific. According to it, only the movements of the hands of the worker create values, useful things, goods and move the economy. What about the work of a scientist, the work of an inventor, the work of a technical engineer, the work of an enterprise organizer? This is work not with hands, but with the brain. She doesn't create anything, doesn't play any role? But people have always had hands, meanwhile, a gigantic

development

the welfare of societies and the masses was achieved only when the brains of scientists and technicians found out how to move hands, and even machines, in order to achieve immeasurably better results. Meanwhile, according to Marx, if you do not move your hands, you are a thief and a parasite. What pathetic nonsense this is. How everything is turned upside down in this nonsense that claims

to be scientific. Meanwhile, Marxism has turned out to be a factor of tremendous strength in the life of our society. Here again we must recall Lebon's ingenious formulas: "The mind creates knowledge, feelings move history." Marxist theory, insignificant for understanding economic life, turned out to be emotionally dynamite. To tell all the poor and destitute: you are poor, you are a beggar and you are unhappy because a rich man has robbed you and continues to rob you, this is to kindle a world fire, to arouse such envy and such hatred that cannot be filled with a sea of blood. Marxism is a lie, but a lie of extraordinary explosive power. It was on this stone that Lenin erected his "church" - in Russia.

I soon understood all the shades of the attitude of the leaders of communism towards Marxist theory. As practitioners and pragmatists who led the state, they perfectly understood the complete worthlessness of Marxism in the field of understanding and organizing economic life; hence their skeptical and ironic attitude towards "educated Marxists". On the contrary, they highly valued the emotional-explosive power of Marxism, which brought them to power and which will lead them (as they not without reason hoped) to power throughout the world. Summarizing in a nutshell: as a science - nonsense; as a method of revolutionary leadership of the masses, it is an indispensable weapon.

I decided to check a little deeper how they relate to Marxism. Officially, it cannot be touched, it is only allowed to "interpret" it, and then only in the most orthodox sense.

I often visited Sokolnikov's house. Grigory Yakovlevich Sokolnikov (real name - Brilliant) was a former barrister. He belonged to the Zinoviev-Kamenev group and was undoubtedly one of the most talented and brilliant Bolshevik leaders. Whatever role he was assigned, he coped with it admirably. During the civil war, he successfully commanded the army. People's Commissar of Finance after the NEP, he did an excellent job of reforming the currency, creating a solid red ruble and quickly putting the chaotic Bolshevik monetary economy in order. After the XIII Congress in May 1924, he was made a candidate member of the Politburo. At the 1926 congress, he spoke together with Zinoviev and Kamenev and was the only speaker who demanded from the rostrum of the congress that Stalin be removed from the post of general secretary. It cost him both the post of the People's Commissariat of Finance and a place in the Politburo. At the Fifteenth Congress, when Stalin outlined his criminal course towards collectivization, Sokolnikov spoke out against this policy and demanded the normal development of the economy, first in light industry. Somehow (it was in 1925) I went to Sokolnikov. He was unwell and did not

leave the house. Usually in such cases we talked about finances, about the economy. This time I decided to take a chance and started talking about Marxism. Without denying the revolutionary role of Marxism, I dwelled on the criticism of Marxist theory. Based on the fact that the theory was created almost a century ago and that life has brought a lot of new things that require the theory to be revised and updated, and also on the fact that the Politburo, for example, does not actually use this theory in its current form as it is clearly behind the times, I outlined, under the guise of desirable improvements, a rather strong breakdown. Sokolnikov listened attentively to my long speech without objecting. When I finished, he said: "Comrade Bazhanov, there is much that is true and interesting in what you say. But there are taboos that cannot be touched. Friendly advice: never tell anyone what you told me. Of course, I followed this advice. So, I came to the conclusion that the leaders of communism use it only as a method to be in power, completely despising

the interests of the people. At the same time, propagandizing communism, crucifying it and trying to fan the world communist conflagration, they absolutely do not believe in its dogma, in its theory. Here was for me the key to understanding another extremely important side of the matter, which confused me all the time. The point was that there were lies all around, and in all communist practice everything was saturated through and through with lies. Why?

Now I understood why. The leaders themselves did not believe in

what they proclaimed as truth, as gospel. For them, it was just a way, and the goals were different, rather low, in which it was impossible to confess. Hence lies as a permanent system that permeates everything; not as a random tactic, but as a permanent entity.

According to Marxist dogma, we have a dictatorship of the proletariat. After seven years of communist revolution, the entire population of the country, robbed and impoverished, is the proletariat. Of course, it has nothing to do with power. The dictatorship is established over him, over the proletariat. Officially, we still have the power of the workers and peasants. Meanwhile, it is obvious to every child that power is only in the hands of the Party, and even no longer in the Party, but in the Party apparatus. There are a lot of all sorts of Soviet authorities in the country, which are in fact completely powerless executors and registrars of decisions of party bodies. I am also a cog in this machine of lies. My Politburo is the supreme power, but this is extremely secret, it must be hidden from the whole world. Everything related to the Politburo is strictly secret: all its decisions, extracts, references, materials; for divulging a secret, the guilty are threatened with all sorts of punishments. But the lie goes on, pervades everything. Trade unions are the official bodies for the protection of workers. In fact, these are organs of control and gendarmerie coercion, the only task of which is to force the working people to work as much as possible, to give as much of them as possible to the slave-owning authorities. All terminology is false. Extermination hard labor is called "corrective labor camps", and hundreds of liars in the newspapers sing praises of the unusually wise and humane Soviet government, which re-educates its worst enemies through labor.

And at Politburo meetings I often ask myself: where am I? At a government meeting a huge country or in Ali Baba's cave, at a meeting of a gang of intruders?

For example. The first questions at each meeting of the Politburo are usually the questions of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. People's Commissar Chicherin and his deputy Litvinov are usually present. Chicherin usually reports. He speaks timidly and humbly, he catches every remark of a member of the Politburo. It is immediately clear that he has no party weight—before the revolution he was a Menshevik. Litvinov, on the other hand, carries himself in a cheeky and impudent manner. Not only because he is a boor by nature. "I am an old Bolshevik, I am here at home." Indeed, he is an old colleague of Lenin and an old emigrant. True, the most famous pages from his pre-revolutionary party activities lie in dark money frauds - for example, the exchange in the West of tsarist paper money stolen by expropriators in the Caucasus during an armed attack on treasury funds; the numbers of large banknotes were rewritten, and it was impossible to exchange them in Russia. Lenin entrusted their exchange to a number of dark personalities, including Litvinov, who was caught during the exchange, was arrested and imprisoned.

The entire Litvinov family is apparently of the same type. His brother in some Soviet combinations in France, already taking advantage of the fact that his brother was a deputy people's commissar, tried to deceive the Soviet authorities, and the Soviets had to turn to a French bourgeois court and prove that Litvinov's brother was a swindler and scoundrel.

Chicherin and Litvinov hate each other with ardent hatred. Not even a month passes when I receive a "strictly secret, only to members of the Politburo" memorandum from one and the other. Chicherin in these notes complains that Litvinov is a complete boor and ignoramus, a rude and dirty animal, which is an undeniable mistake to allow him to do diplomatic work. Litvinov writes that Chicherin is a pederast, an idiot and a maniac, an abnormal person who works only at night, which disrupts the work of the people's commissariat; To this Litvinov adds picturesque details about the fact that all night at the door of Chicherin's office there is a Red Army soldier from the internal security forces of the GPU, whom the authorities select in such a way that you can not worry about his virtue. Members of the Politburo read these notes, smile, and things go no further than this. So, foreign policy issues are being discussed, about some of

the regular international conferences. "I propose," says Litvinov, "to recognize the royal debts." I look at him not without surprise. Lenin and the Soviet government proclaimed dozens of times that one of the main gains of the revolution was the refusal to pay foreign debts made by Russia under the tsarist regime (by the way, the French banking businessmen did not suffer at all, who immediately pocketed the agreed commission when making loans, A

the French midiette and the petty clerk suffered, saving money for old age and believing the assurances of the banks that there was no better place for their savings. One of the members of the Politburo is simpler, it seems, Mikhailvanych Kalinin, asks: "What debts, pre-war or military?" - "Both those and others," Litvinov casually throws. "Where will we get the funds to pay them?" Litvinov's face is impudent and half-contemptuous, a cigarette hangs in the corner of his mouth. "And who tells you that we will pay them? I say - do not pay, but recognize. Mikhailvanych does not give up: "But to admit - it means to admit that they must, and thereby promise to pay." Litvinov even looks tired - how they don't understand such simple things: "No, there's no question of any payment." Here Kamenev begins to take an interest in the matter: "But how can one do it in order to admit, not to pay, and not to lose face?" (Kamenev, to do him justice, is still worried about his face.) "But nothing could be simpler," explains Litvinov. - We announce to the whole world that we recognize the royal debts. Well, there all sorts of well-meaning idiots will immediately raise a fuss that the Bolsheviks are changing, that we are becoming a state, like any other, and so on. We are making the most of this. Then, in party order, we issue a secret directive to the localities: to form societies of victims of foreign intervention everywhere, which would collect the claims of the victims; you understand very well that if we issue an appropriate circular on the party line, then we will collect statements from the "victims" for any amount; well, we'll be modest and collect them for an amount a little more than the king's debts. And when negotiations for payment begin, we will present our counterclaims, which will completely cover our debts, and we will still demand that we be paid the excess.

The project is under serious discussion. The main difficulty is that Lenin's triumphant statements about refusing to pay the tsar's debts are too fresh in my memory. They fear that this will bring confusion to the ideas of the fraternal communist parties abroad. Kamenev even casually remarks: "This is what Curzon calls the Bolshevik monkey tricks." So far it has been decided to abstain from Litvinov's proposal.

Chapter 8. Stalin's Secretariat. Military

STALIN LISTS. TOVSTUKHA AND MEHLIS. STRUGGLE FOR POWER

ONGOING. TROTSKY IS REMOVED FROM THE RED ARMY. Frunze, Voroshilov, Budyonny

The thirteenth congress has passed, and Tovstukha is energetically engaged in the next "half-obscure case." He takes away "for study" all the materials of the congress. But it soon becomes clear that he is not interested in all the materials, but some. He studies them together with some dark Chekist, who turns out to be a specialist in graphology.

When congress delegates come, they come to the credentials committee of the congress, which checks their mandates and issues congress membership cards (with a voting or deliberative vote). At the same time, each delegate of the congress must personally fill out a long questionnaire with several dozen questions. Everyone is subject to this duty.

While the Congress is going on, the Credentials Committee performs the statistical work of analyzing the questionnaires and at the end of the Congress makes a report: so many delegates participated in the Congress. so many men, so many women; according to social origin, the delegates are divided like this; according to the age; by party seniority; And so on and so forth. All delegates understand the need for the detailed questionnaires they filled out.

But there is one detail that they do not foresee. At

the end of the congress, the central party bodies (the Central Committee, the Central Control Commission, the Central Audit Commission) are elected. Before this, the leaders of the Central Committee gather with the leaders of the main delegations (Moscow, Leningrad, Ukraine, etc.). This is the so-called "seigneurin convention", which everyone colloquially refers to as the "blue envelope". He works out in disputes a draft of the composition of the new Central Committee. This list is printed and each voting delegate receives one copy of the list. This copy is the ballot that will be put into the ballot box

during elections of the Central Committee by secret ballot. But just because there is only one list does not mean that delegates are required to vote for it. Here is the party, not the elections of the soviets. There is still some party freedom in the party, and each delegate has the right to strike off any name from the list and replace it with any other of his choice (which, by the way, he must write with his own hand). Then the votes are counted. There is very little chance that the intended "blue envelope" will not be selected; this requires an unlikely collusion of important delegations (capital and others). But although the entire list usually passes, the number of votes cast for the chosen ones varies widely. If, say, there are 1,000 delegates, then the most popular people in the party will get 950-970 votes, and the least acceptable won't collect even 700. This is very noticed and taken into account.

What is not taken into account at all and what no one knows is the work of Tovstukha. Tovstukha (i.e., Stalin) is most interested in which of the delegates crossed out Stalin's name on their ballots. If only he had crossed it out, his name would have remained anonymous. But, having crossed out, he had to write a different surname, and this gives data about his handwriting. Comparing this handwriting with the handwriting of the delegates on their questionnaires filled in by their hand, Tovstukha and the KGB graphologist establish who voted against Stalin (and, therefore, his hidden enemy), but also who voted against Zinoviev, and who was against Trotsky, and who was against Bukharin. . All this is important for Stalin and will be taken into account. And in particular, who is the hidden enemy of Stalin. The time will come - in ten years - they will all receive a bullet in the back of the head. Tovstukha is now preparing lists for future retribution. But Comrade Stalin never forgets anything and never forgives anything.

In order to say everything about this work of Tovstukha, I must run ahead a little. After the Thirteenth Party Congress, and in 1925, and in 1926, and in 1927, the same inner-party freedom continues, there is a struggle against the opposition in committees, at cells, at meetings of organizations, at meetings of party activists. The leaders of the opposition vehemently invite their supporters to come forward as much as possible, to attack the Central Committee - by this they emphasize the strength and weight opposition.

What surprises me is that after the Fourteenth Congress, Stalin and his new majority of the Central Committee have nothing against this freedom. This, it would seem, is not at all in Stalin's customs: it is easier to forbid a party discussion - to pass a resolution of the plenum of the Central Committee that disputes harm party work, divert forces from useful constructive activity.

However, I already know Stalin enough and guess what's the matter. I receive the final confirmation in the conversation I have with Stalin and Mekhlis. Mekhlis is holding a report on some meeting of party activists and quoting extremely harsh speeches by the opposition. Mekhlis is indignant: "Comrade Stalin, don't you think that every measure is being crossed here, that it's in vain for the Central Committee to allow itself to be openly discredited like that? Wouldn't it be better to ban it? Comrade. Stalin grins: "Let them talk! Let them talk! Not the enemy is dangerous, which reveals itself. Dangerous is the hidden enemy, which we do not know. And these, which are all identified, all rewritten - the time for accounts with them will come.

This is Tovstukha's next "dark" work. In his office at the Lenin Institute, he draws up lists, long lists of people who are now so naively opposing Stalin. They think: "Now we are against it, tomorrow, perhaps, we will be for Stalin - there was, is and will be internal freedom in the party." They will not think that Stalin in power is giving them the opportunity to sign their death warrant: in a few years, according to the lists that Tovstukha is now compiling, they will be shot in batches, hundreds, thousands. great human

naivety.

How do I feel in Stalin's secretariat - this point of rare importance? I don't have the slightest sympathy for either Kanner or Tovstukha. About Kanner, I think that this is a dangerous snake, and my relationship with him is purely business. Seeing my career, he tries to be very kind to me. But I have no illusions. If tomorrow Stalin considers it good to liquidate me, he will entrust this to Kanner, and Kanner will find the appropriate equipment. For me, Kanner is a criminal subject, and the fact that Stalin needs him so much says a lot about the "master", as Mekhlis and Kanner like to call him. Outwardly, Kanner is always cheerful and friendly. He is small in stature, always in boots (it is not known why), black lamb hair.

Tovstukha (Ivan Pavlovich) is a tall, very lean intellectual, with tuberculosis; from tuberculosis, he will die in 1935, when the execution according to his lists has just begun. His wife also has tuberculosis. He is thirty-five or thirty-six years old. Before the revolution, he was an emigrant, lived abroad, returned to Russia after the revolution. It is not known why in 1918 he became the secretary of the People's Commissariat for Nationalities, where Stalin was People's Commissar (although he did nothing there). From there, he moved to the apparatus of the Central Committee, even before Stalin became General Secretary. When Stalin became General Secretary in 1922, he took Tovstukha as his secretary, and almost until his death, Tovstukha was in the Stalinist secretariat, performing important "dark things", although at the same time, formally, he was, as I said, also an assistant Director of the Lenin Institute, and then the Institute of Marx, Engels and Lenin. In 1927, Stalin will make him his main assistant (at that time I will no longer be in the secretariat, and Mekhlis will go to study at the Institute of Red Professors). Then, under his leadership, Poskrebyshev will also be in Stalin's secretariat, who will be in charge of the so-called Special Sector, and after Tovstukha's death will take his place; and Yezhov, who will be in charge of the "personnel sector" of the Stalinist secretariat (he will continue Tovstukha's lists; in a few years, having become the head of the GPU, he will shoot according to these lists and flood the country with a new sea of blood, of course, on the high initiative of his boss, the great and brilliant comrade Stalin); and Malenkov, the secretary of the Politburo, who, out of caution, will still be called the "protocol secretary of the Politburo") and Poskrebyshev's deputy for the Special Sector; he will later replace Yezhov as head

of the personnel sector. As Stalin becomes more and more the sole dictator, this secretariat of his will play an increasingly important role. A moment will come when it will be less important in the apparatus of power that you are the chairman of the Council of Ministers or a member of the Politburo than that you are a Stalinist secretary who has constant access to him.

Tovstukha is a gloomy subject, looks from under his brows. He coughs dully - he only has half a lung. Stalin has complete confidence in him. He treats me cautiously ("this young man is making a very brilliant career"), but he cannot forgive me that I replaced him (and Nazaretyan) as Secretary of the Politburo and continue to be in the very center of events, while he is forced somewhere behind behind the scenes to do some dirty work for Stalin. Once he tries to bite me. He says to Stalin (not in my presence, but in front of Mekhlis, who later told me everything): "Why is Bazhanov called the secretary of the Politburo? It is you, Comrade Stalin, the secretary of the Politburo. Bazhanov, on the other hand, has the right only to be called the technical secretary of the Politburo. Stalin answered evasively: "Of course, the executive secretary of the Politburo, chosen by the Central Committee, is me. But Bazhanov does a very important job and unloads me from a lot." I do not like Tovstukha - this is a dark

subject, an envious intriguer, ready to carry out the most nasty orders of Stalin. Lev Zakharovich Mekhlis of the age of Tovstukha. After

the civil war, he moved to Nar. Com. Slave. Cross. Inspections, another people's commissariat, at the head of which stood, doing nothing in it, Stalin; from here Stalin takes him as his secretary in the Central Committee in 1922. Mekhlis is more decent than Kanner and Tovstukha, he avoids "dark" deeds. He even creates for himself a comfortable mask of an "ideological communist". I don't really believe in her, I see that he is an opportunist who will adapt to everything. This is how it will happen. In the future, no Stalinist crimes will embarrass him. Until the end of his days, he will serve Stalin without fail, but at the same time he will pretend that he believes in Stalin's superiority. Now he is Stalin's personal secretary. A good opportunist, he accepts everything and obeys everything, accepts my career and tries to establish friendly relations with me. In 1927, Tovstukha drove him out of the Stalinist secretariat. He will leave for three years to study at the Institute of Red Professors. But in 1930 he would come to Stalin and easily prove to him that the central organ of the Pravda party was not doing the necessary work to explain to the party what role Stalin's personal leadership played. Stalin would immediately appoint him editor-in-chief of Pravda. And here he will render Stalin an indispensable service. Pravda sets the tone for the entire Party and all Party organizations. Mekhlis in Pravda will begin to write day after day about the great and brilliant Stalin, about his brilliant leadership. At first it will give a strange impression. Nobody

Stalin in the party is not considered a genius, especially by those who know

him. In 1927, more than once I went to the cell of the Institute of Red Professors. This was a reserve of young party careerists who did not so much study science and improve their skills as study and count on which horse to put in the sense of making their future career. Making fun of them, I said: "I don't understand one thing. Why none of you will write a book about Stalinism. I would like to see a Gosizdat that will not publish this book immediately. In addition, I guarantee that in no more than a year the author of the book will be a member of the Central Committee. Young careerists winced: "What? About Stalinism? Well, you can say that - a cynic. (I must say that I said this out of pure mischief: at that time I was a staunch enemy of communism and was preparing my flight abroad.) In 1927, using the term "Stalinism" seemed indecent. In 1930, the time had come, and Mekhlis from issue to issue of Pravda set the tone for party organizations: "Under the wise leadership of our great and brilliant leader and teacher Stalin." It was impossible not to repeat this to the party apparatchiks in the cells. Two years of such work, and neither in the country nor in the party it was possible to speak of Comrade Stalin without adding "great and brilliant." And then various prospectors invented many other things: "the father of nations", "the greatest genius

humanity", etc.

In 1932, Stalin again took Mekhlis into his secretariat. But Tovstukh is still more convenient for Stalin, and Stalin will gradually let Mekhlis go along the Soviet line. Before the war, he will be the head of the PUR (Political Directorate of the Red Army), then the People's Commissar of the State Control, during the war - a member of the Military Councils of the armies and fronts (where he will be a real Stalinist - an unrelenting, indomitable devourer of Red Army lives), after the war again Minister of State Control. He will die in his own bed in the same year as Stalin. The Stalinist secretariat is growing and playing an increasingly important role. But Stalin's main battle for power has not

yet been won. Just now, in May 1924, Zinoviev and Kamenev saved Stalin, and he is already thinking how to betray them.

A funny episode took place at the Twelfth Congress. In order to demonstrate to the country that the working people supposedly accepted the wise leadership of the Party with gratitude, the performance of non-Party delegations was staged at the congress for the first time (in the following years this became a common performance). To begin with, a non-partisan delegation of workers from the Moscow textile factory, the famous Trekhgorka (Trekhgornaya textile manufactory), was released. A lively woman with a well-spoken tongue was properly slandered, and from the rostrum of the congress she excellently rattled both about the wise leadership of the great Bolshevik Party, and about the fact that "we, non-party workers, wholly approve and support our senior leading party comrades, etc. » But the intention was different. She wasn't actually released for that. It was necessary to emphasize to the country that it was led by new leaders. Until now, the usual slogan has been: "Long live our leaders Lenin and Trotsky!" Now it was necessary to show that the masses were following the new leaders. And although the clever woman was taught and prepared, it would seem that she learned everything well, but the result was embarrassment. "And in conclusion, I'll say: long live our leaders, comrade (somewhat uncertainly) Zinoviev and ... (after some thought and turning towards the presidium) I apologize, it seems, comrade Kaminov." The congress laughed out loud, and Stalin in particular. Kamenev smiled sourly at the presidium. By the way, it never occurred to the organizers to include Stalin among the "leaders". It would seem ridiculous.

Meanwhile, since neither at the pre-Congress plenum nor at the congress did Trotsky personally speak out against Stalin, it occurred to Stalin that it was impossible to maneuver: Zinoviev and Kamenev were widely used to remove Trotsky; Could Trotsky now be used to weaken Zinoviev and Kamenev? Stalin made a test - it failed.

On June 17, at a course for secretaries of district committees under the Central Committee, Stalin made a report in which he quite clearly announced to his future apparatchiks that the dictatorship of the proletariat was now, in essence, being replaced by the dictatorship of the party. But at the same time, without naming Zinoviev and Kamenev, he directed fire against them,

accusing them of various mistakes. Zinoviev reacted very energetically. At his request, it was immediately con

meeting of "leading party workers" (members of the Politburo and 25 members of the Central Committee), at which Zinoviev and Kamenev raised the question point-blank, and about the attack against them, and about the Stalinist thesis about the "dictatorship of the party" as a clear mistake. The meeting, of course, the Stalinist thesis condemned and condemned the Stalinist action against the other two members of the troika. Stalin saw that he was in a hurry and made a mistake. He announced that he was resigning from his post as general secretary. But the conference took this as a formal

demonstration and did not accept the resignation. On the other hand, Zinoviev and Kamenev understood the Stalinist maneuver towards Trotsky and intensified their attacks against Trotsky, demanding his expulsion from the party. But there was no majority in the Central Committee, with the exception of Trotsky. Zinoviev tried through his fellows to release the Central Committee of the Komsomol into the arena, which suddenly demanded Trotsky's expulsion. But then the Politburo resolutely returned to its dogma - it is not the business of the Komsomol mind to interfere in politics, and as a warning dispersed

the Central Committee of the Komsomol, removing a dozen and a half leading workers from its composition. It is amusing that at that time in the Central Committee Stalin was hindering the attacks of Zinoviev and Kamenev against Trotsky. But in the Comintern, Zinoviev had his own hand as lord, and at the 5th Congress of the Comintern, which took place in late June - early July 1924, a resolution "on the Russian question" was passed against Trotsky, and the Bulgarian Kolarov, who was most distinguished

in attacks on Trotsky, was nominated by Zinoviev to the General Secretaries of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. But before the end of the year, there was a certain lull in the struggle against Trotsky. In the summer there was a drought, the harvest was very poor. In August there was an uprising in Georgia. There were disputes in the Politburo about policy towards the peasantry. Strictly speaking, the Politburo did not know what policy to adopt towards the peasantry. The Politburo wanted to embark on the path of industrialization of the country. At what expense to produce it; i.e. by whom? (The formulation of the question is classically Bolshevik: in order to do something, someone must be robbed.) The orthodox communists, led by Preobrazhensky, proposed to carry out "initial socialist accumulation" at the expense of the peasantry. The Politburo hesitated. The discussion of the problem at the plenum of the Central Committee at the end of October yielded nothing, despite the adoption of pompous declarations about the turn "to face the countryside." Take over the countryside with the help of collectivization, driving the peasants into collective farms? Then they remembered that not long ago, in one of his last articles, in the article "On Cooperation", dictated on January 4 and 6, 1923 and published in Pravda at the end of May, Lenin raised the question of collective farms, but had in mind only voluntary the creation of collective farms, and at the plenum of the Central Committee on June 26, 1923, this issue was discussed and the Leninist directive was adopted. But Zinoviev

and Kamenev did not expect any special results at that time either from the state farms or from the collective farms, and Stalin had no opinion on this at all. But at the end of the year, the center of attention of party life suddenly turned again to the fight against Trotsky. Stalin abandoned his idea of using Trotsky against the Allies. And Trotsky wrote the book "1917", in the preface to which, called "The Lessons of October", he energetically attacked Zinoviev and Kamenev, arguing that their behavior in October 1917 (when they were known to be against the October armed coup) was by no means it is no coincidence that these people do not in any way possess the qualities of leaders of the revolution. These "Lessons of October" Trotsky published an article in the newspapers. After that, Zinoviev and Kamenev again offered peace and alliance to Stalin. Stalin hastened to agree, and the troika was restored for a while. By the way, at this time, Stalin experienced a certain crisis - lack of confidence in his abilities. He saw that he had made a series of blunders, taking the fight to the line of political strategy where he was weak; he was also influenced by the uprising in Georgia, which was a clear result of his Georgian national policy. Here Stalin became convinced that he would not defeat his rivals along the line of big politics (but what about the countryside?), but along the completely true and tested line of selecting his

own people and capturing a majority in the Central Committee; 'til it's done, maneuver and pull. On the contrary, Zinoviev in the troika furiously demanded the final overthrow of Trotsky. In January 192

expel Trotsky from the party. Stalin opposed this proposal, playing the role of a peacemaker. Stalin persuaded

the plenum not only not to expel Trotsky from the party, but to appoint him both a member of the Central Committee and a member of the Politburo. True, Trotsky's speeches and political positions were condemned. But, most importantly, the moment had come to remove him from the Red Army. His replacement had long been prepared in the person of his deputy, Frunze. Stalin was not very happy with Frunze, but Zinoviev and Kamenev were for him, and as a result of long preliminary bargaining at the troika, Stalin agreed to appoint Frunze to the place of Trotsky as the People's Commissariat of War and chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council, and Voroshilov as his deputy.

Voroshilov, after the civil war, not without opposition from Trotsky, was appointed commander of the secondary North Caucasian military district, but Stalin steadily followed his promotion, and as a result of the latest reorganizations of the military department that year, he was already commander of one of the most important military districts - Moscow. Stalin suggested to the plenum that, while leaving Trotsky a member of the Central Committee and the Politburo, he would be warned at the same time - "if he continues his factional activities, then he will be removed from the Politburo and the Central Committee." Having removed him from the post of the People's Commissariat for Military Affairs, the plenum appointed him chairman of the Glavkontsesskom and chairman of a special meeting at the Supreme Economic Council on product quality.

These appointments were both provocative and comical. At the head of the Glavkontsesskom, Trotsky was supposed to discuss with Western capitalists the projects of industrial concessions proposed by him within the USSR. Meanwhile, the Politburo has long known and firmly established for itself that these concessions were nothing but crude swindling traps. Concessions were offered to Western capitalists on very tempting and outwardly very favorable terms. The terms of the agreement were well observed while the concessionaire imported and installed machinery and equipment in Russia and set the enterprise in motion. After that, with the help of any trick (of which the authorities had any number of tricks), the concessionaire was placed in conditions under which he could not fulfill the contract, the contract was terminated, the imported equipment and the established enterprise became the property of the Soviet state (I will tell you in detail about one of such tricks with Lena Goldfields, because this story had unexpected and funny consequences). Actually, for this trick with concessions was created. Trotsky was not well suited for these fraudulent operations - which is probably why he was appointed there.

It was even less suitable for monitoring the quality of the products of Soviet factories. A brilliant orator and polemicist, tribune of difficult turning points, he was ridiculous as an observer of the quality of Soviet trousers and nails. However, he made an attempt in good faith to fulfill this task assigned to him by the party; created a commission of specialists, traveled with it a number of factories and presented the results of the study to the Supreme Council of the National Economy; His conclusions, of course, had no consequences.

Frunze stood at the head of the military department. I must say that back in May 1924 there were three candidates for Politburo membership were added: Frunze, Sokolnikov and Dzerzhinsky.

An old revolutionary, a prominent civil war commander, Frunze was a very capable military man. The man is very closed and cautious, he gave me the impression of a player who plays some big game, but does not show cards. At Politburo meetings he spoke very little and was entirely occupied with military matters.

As early as 1924, as chairman of the Central Committee commission for examining the state of the Red Army, he reported to the Politburo that the Red Army in its present form was completely unfit for combat, was more of a disbanded band of robbers than an army, and that it should be completely disbanded. This was done, and in the utmost secrecy. Only cadres were left - officers and non-commissioned officers. And the new army was created in the fall from the drafted peasant youth. For almost the entirety of 1924, the USSR had no army; It seems that the West did not know this. The second profound change that Frunze made was

that he achieved the abolition of the institution of political commissars in the army; they were replaced by assistant commanders for political affairs with political propaganda functions and without the right to interfere in

team decisions. In 1925, Frunze added to all this with transfers and appointments, which led to the fact that at the head of military districts, corps and divisions were good and capable military men, selected on the basis of their military qualifications, but not on the basis of their communist loyalty. I was already a latent anti-communist at that time.

Looking at the lists of the senior command staff that Frunze checked out, I asked myself the question: "If I were in his place, such as I am, an anti-communist, what kind of cadres would I bring to the military elite?" And I had to answer myself: "exactly these." These were shots quite suitable for a coup d'état in the event of war. Of course, it looked outwardly and so that they were very good

military.

I did not have the opportunity to speak with Stalin about this, and I did not have the slightest desire to draw his attention to this issue. But on occasion I asked Mekhlis if he had ever heard Stalin's opinion about new military appointments. At the same time, I pretended to be innocent: "Stalin is always so interested in military affairs." What does Stalin think? Mekhlis asked. - Nothing good. Look at the list: all these Tukhachevskys, Korkis, Uboreviches, Avksentievs - what kind of communists they are. All this is good for the 18th Brumaire, and not for the Red Army. I asked: "Is it you from yourself or is it Stalin's opinion?" Mekhlis pouted and answered with gravity: "Of course, both his and mine." Meanwhile, Stalin behaved towards Frunze rather mysteriously. I witnessed the

dissatisfaction that he expressed in frank conversations within the troika about his appointment. And with Frunze, he behaved very friendly, never criticized his proposals. What does it mean? Was this not a repeat of the story with Uglanov (which I will talk about later); that is, Stalin pretends to be against Zinoviev's henchman Frunze, but in fact he has concluded a secret alliance with him against Zinoviev. But it doesn't look like it. Frunze is not like that, and he has nothing in common with Stalin.

The riddle was clarified only in October 1925, when Frunze, having suffered the crisis of a stomach ulcer (from which he suffered from the time of pre-revolutionary prisons), fully recovered. Stalin expressed extreme concern for his health. "We don't look after the precious health of our best workers at all." The Politburo almost forced Frunze to undergo an operation to get rid of his ulcer. In addition, Frunze's doctors did not consider the operation dangerous at all. I looked at all this differently when I learned that Kanner and the Central Committee

doctor Pogosyants were organizing the operation. My vague fears turned out to be quite correct. During the operation, precisely the kind of anesthesia that Frunze could not bear was cunningly applied. He died on the operating table, and his wife, convinced that he had been stabbed, committed suicide. The Tale of the Unextinguished Moon, which Pilnyak wrote on this occasion, is well known. This story cost him dearly.

Why did Stalin organize this murder of Frunze? Is it only to replace him with his man - Voroshilov? I do not think so: in a year or two, having come to sole power, Stalin could easily carry out this replacement. I think that Stalin shared my feeling that Frunze saw for himself in the future the role of the Russian Bonaparte. He removed him immediately, and shot the rest of this group of military men (Tukhachevsky and others) in due time.

Trotsky in his book "Stalin" categorically denies my guess about Frunze, but Trotsky distorts my thought. He attributes to me the assertion that Frunze was at the head of the military conspiracy. I have never written anything like this (especially since it is quite obvious that no conspiracies were possible in Soviet Russia at that time). I wrote that Frunze, in my opinion, had outlived his communism, had become a military man to the marrow of his bones, and was waiting in the wings. There is no conspiracy to speak of here.

But it is hardly worth arguing with Trotsky about this - he was distinguished by an amazing lack of understanding of people and amazing naivety. Further, speaking about him, I will cite the relevant facts here. Of course, after the

death of Frunze, Voroshilov was put in charge of the Red Army. After the XIV Congress in January 1926, he also became a member of the Politburo. It was a very mediocre character who, even during the civil war, stuck with Stalin and

always supported Stalin during the rebellion of the Stalinist freemen against the firm organizational hand of Trotsky. His extreme narrow-mindedness was well known in the Party. The students of the historical department of the Institute of the Red Professors joked: "The whole world history is divided into two sharply limited periods: before Klimenty Efremovich - and after." He was always obedient and diligent assistant of Stalin and served for some time for decoration and after Stalin's death.

The entire Stalinist military group during the Civil War went up. It is difficult to find any capable military man in it. But already skillfully orchestrated propaganda made some of them famous, for example, Budyonny. It was a very picturesque character. A typical sergeant-major of the tsarist army, a good cavalryman and a grunt, he found himself at the beginning of the civil war at the head of a cavalry gang that fought against the whites. At the head - formally - several communists manipulated the gang. The gang grew, gained success - the cavalry were the tanks of these years. At some point, Moscow, which relied on cavalry, came to grips with Budyonny.

Trotsky at this time threw the slogan "Proletarian, on the horse!", which sounded rather comical in its pomposity and unreality. The fact is that people of the steppes made good cavalry - born cavalrymen, such as the Cossacks. It was still possible to put a peasant on a horse, who, not being a cavalryman, nevertheless knew the horse, got used to it and knew how to handle it. But the urban worker ("proletariat") on horseback was nowhere. Trotsky's slogan sounded ridiculous.

At some point, Budyonny received gifts from Moscow as a sign of attention: a car and a party card. A somewhat alarmed Budyonny called the leaders of his gang. "Here, lads," he reported, "they sent me a car from Moscow and this." Here, carefully, like a fragile Chinese vase, he placed a party card on the table. The lads became thoughtful, but on mature reflection decided: "Take the car, Semyon; car is good. And "this" (membership card), you know, let it lie: he does not ask for bread. So Budyonny became a communist.

The Budyonny gang soon grew into a brigade, then into a cavalry corps. Moscow gave him commissars and a good chief of staff. Rising in ranks and being a commander, Budyonny did not interfere in operational affairs and in command. When the headquarters asked his opinion about the planned operation, he invariably answered: "And you know that as you know. My job is to cut." During the civil

war, he "hacked" and unquestioningly obeyed Stalin and Voroshilov, who were assigned to him and commanded him. After the war, he was made something of a cavalry inspector. In the end, somehow they decided to let him attend a meeting of the famous Politburo. My memory accurately retained this amusing event.

At the meeting of the Politburo, the turn comes to questions of the military department. I order to let the summoned military into the hall, including Budyonny. Budyonny enters on tiptoe, but his heavy boots rumble loudly. Between the table and the wall, the passage is wide, but the whole figure of Budyonny expresses fear - as if something were not to fall down and break. They show him a chair next to Rykov. Budyonny sits down. His mustache sticks out like a cockroach. He looks straight ahead and clearly does not understand what is being said. He seems to be thinking: "Here you go, this is that famous Politburo, which, they say, can do anything, even turn a man into a woman."

Meanwhile, the affairs of the Revolutionary Military Council are over. Kamenev says: "We have finished with the strategy. Military people are free." Sitting Budyonny, does not understand such subtleties. And Kamenev is also an eccentric: "Military people are free." If only it were like this: "Comrade Budyonny! Attention! Right shoulder forward, step march! Well, then everything would be clear. Here Stalin with a broad gesture of a hospitable host: "Sit, Semyon, sit." So, bulging his eyes and still looking straight ahead, Budyonny sat for another two or three questions. In the end, I explained to him that it was time to

leave. Then Budyonny became a marshal, and in 1943 he even joined the Central Committee of the party. True, this was the Central Committee of the Stalinist draft, and if Stalin had a sense of humor, he would at the same time, following the example of Caligula, could introduce the Budennovsky horse into the Central Committee. But Stalin did not have a sense of humor.

It must be added that during the Soviet-German war, the insignificance of both Voroshilov and Budyonny after the very first operations became so obvious that Stalin had to send them to the Urals to prepare reserves.

Chapter 9. Stalin

STALIN. CHARACTER. QUALITIES AND DISADVANTAGES. CAREER. IMMORALITY. ATTITUDE TO EMPLOYEES AND TO ME. NADIA ALLILUEVA. YASHKA

It's time to talk about Comrade Stalin. Now I know him well, perhaps even very well. Stalin's

appearance is well known. Only not a single portrait shows that his face is pitted with smallpox. His face is inexpressive, his height is average, he waddles, sucking his pipe all the time. Various authors claim that

he has one hand damaged and he does not use it well. However, his daughter Svetlana says that his right arm was not moving well, and the Bolshevik Shumyatsky wrote in the Soviet press that Stalin could not bend his left arm. To tell the truth, I never noticed any defect of this kind in Stalin. In any case, I sometimes saw how he made wide and sweeping gestures with his right hand - he could bend it and unbend it. In the end, I don't know - Stalin never did any physical work in my presence - it may be that his left hand was not in order. But I never found a chance

notice it.

The lifestyle is extremely unhealthy, sedentary. Never goes in for sports, any physical work. Smokes (pipe), drinks (wine; prefers Kakheti). In the second half of his reign, he spends every evening at the table, eating and drinking in the company of members of his Politburo. How, with this lifestyle, he lived to be 73 years old is amazing. Always calm, well-controlled. Secretive and cunning

extremely. Unusually vengeful. He never forgives or forgets anything - he will take revenge in twenty years. It is very difficult to find any nice features in his character - I did not succeed.

Gradually, myths and legends were created about him. For example, about his extraordinary will, firmness and determination. It is a myth. Stalin is an extremely cautious and indecisive person. He very often does not know how to be and what to do. But he doesn't show it. I have seen so many times how he hesitates, does not dare, and prefers to follow events rather than lead them.

Is he smart? He is not stupid and not devoid of natural common sense, with which he is very well managed. For

example, at meetings of the Politburo all sorts of state affairs are discussed all the time. Stalin is uncultured and cannot say anything sensible and sensible on the issues under discussion. This is a very uncomfortable position. Natural cunning and common sense allow him to find a very successful way out. He follows the debate, and when he sees that the majority of the members of the Politburo are inclined towards some decision, he takes the floor and, in a few short sentences, proposes to accept what, as he noticed, the majority is inclined to. He does this in simple words, where his ignorance cannot especially manifest itself (for example: "I think we should accept Comrade Rykov's proposal; but what Comrade Pyatakov proposes, it won't work, comrades, it won't work"). It always turns out that although Stalin is simple, he speaks badly, but what he proposes is always accepted. Without penetrating into Stalin's cunning, members of the Politburo begin to see some kind of hidden wisdom (and even mysterious) in Stalin's speeches. I don't fall for this deception. I see that he has no system of thought; today he can offer something completely different from what he offered yesterday; I see that he just catches the opinion of the majority. That he does not understand these questions well, I know from conversations with him "at home", in the Central Committee. But members of the Politburo succumb to hoaxes and eventually begin to find meaning in Stalin's speeches that they do not really have.

Stalin is uncultured, never reads anything, is not interested in anything. Both science and scientific methods are inaccessible and uninteresting to him. He is a poor speaker, speaks with a strong Georgian accent. His speeches have very little content. He speaks with difficulty, looking for the right word on the ceiling. He does not actually write any works; what are his writings are his speeches and speeches made on any occasion, and then the secretaries make something literary from the transcript (he does not even look at the result: to give the final article or book form is a matter (secretary). Tovstukha usually does this. Stalin never says anything witty. In all the years of working

with him, I only once heard him try to be sarcastic. It was like this. Tovstukha and I, we are standing and talking in the office of Mehlis - Kanner. Stalin's office. He looks extremely important and solemn; besides, he raises the finger of his right hand. We fall silent in anticipation of something very important. "Tovstuka," says Stalin, "my mother had a goat - exactly like you; only went without pince-nez." After which he turns and goes to his office. Tovstukha giggles slightly obsequiously. Stalin is indifferent to art, literature, music. Occasionally he goes to listen to the opera - he listens to Aida more often. Women. Stalin is not interested

in women and does not work. He has enough of his

wife, whom he also does very little. What are Stalin's passions?

One, but all-consuming, absolute, in which he is entirely, is the thirst for power. Passion is manic, Asian, the passion of an Asian satrap of distant times. He serves only her, only she is busy all the time, only in her he sees the purpose of life. Of course,

in the struggle for power, this passion is useful. But still, at first glance, it seems difficult to explain how, with such a meager arsenal of data, Stalin was able to come to absolute dictatorial power. Let's trace the

stages of this ascent. And we will be even more surprised that the negative qualities were more useful to him than the positive ones. Stalin begins

as a petty provincial revolutionary agitator. The Leninist Bolshevik group of professional revolutionaries suits him perfectly - here you are not supposed to work like all other people, but you can live at the expense of some kind of party fund. Stalin's heart never lay in work. There is a known risk: the authorities may arrest and deport to the north under police supervision. For the Social Democrats, these repressions go no further (with the Socialist-Revolutionaries throwing bombs, the authorities act much more abruptly). In exile, the tsarist authorities provide everything necessary; within the specified town or locality, life is free; you can run away, but then you go into an illegal position. All the same, the life of an ordinary agitator is much less comfortable (and he does not move much) than the life of the leaders - the Lenins and Martovs in Geneva and Paris: the leaders absolutely refuse to subject their precious persons to any inconvenience.

Leaders in exile are constantly looking for funds - both for their precious life and for party activities. Funding is also provided by the fraternal communist parties (but sparingly and reluctantly), bourgeois benefactors. For example, Burevestnik (aka Maxim Gorky), who rotates in the Moscow Art Theater, helped the artist of the Moscow Art Theater Andreeva to captivate the millionaire Savva Morozov, and the golden manna through Andreeva goes to Lenin's cash desk. But this is not enough, always not enough. The anarchists and part of the socialist revolutionaries found a way to raise the necessary funds - simply through armed robberies of capitalists and banks. This is called "ex-ami" (expropriations) in revolutionary business jargon. But the fraternal Social-Democratic parties, which have long been playing at respectability and often taking part in governments, resolutely reject this practice. The Russian Mensheviks also reject it. Reluctantly makes declarations in this sense, and Lenin. But Stalin quickly realizes that Lenin is only pretending, but he will be happy with any money, even coming from a bandit raid. Stalin takes an active part in seducing some of the Caucasian bandits and converting them to the Bolshevik faith. The best conquest in this area is Kamo Petrosyan, a thug and bandit of desperate courage. Several armed robberies made by the Petrosyan gang pleasantly fill Lenin's cash register

(there are difficulties only in the exchange of money). Naturally, Lenin accepts this money with pleasure. Comrade Stalin organizes these robberies of the Petrosyan gang. He himself does not participate in them out of caution.

(By the way, is Stalin a coward? It is very difficult to answer this question. In all of Stalin's life, not a single example can be cited when he would have shown courage, neither in revolutionary times, nor during the civil war, where he always commanded from afar, from a distant rear, nor in peacetime.) Lenin is extremely grateful to Stalin for his activities and is not averse to moving him up the party ladder; for example, enter the Central Committee. But this cannot be done at the party congress, the delegates will say: "The fact that he organizes armed robberies for the party is very good, but this is by no means a reason to introduce him to the leaders of the party." Lenin found the right path: in 1912, Comrade Stalin was "co-opted" as a member of the Central Committee without any elections. Since he then lives in exile until the revolution, the question of him is not raised in the party. And from exile with the February revolution, he returns to the capital already as an old member of the Central Committee.

It is known that neither in the first revolution of 1917, nor in the October Revolution, Stalin played any role, he was in the shadows and waited. Some time after taking power, Lenin appointed him people's commissar of two people's commissariats, which, however, according to Lenin's thought, were doomed to be quickly scrapped: the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, a stillborn brainchild, which Lenin thought to reorganize, connecting with the Central Control Commission (which was later done), and the People's Commissariat for Nationalities, which was also to be abolished, transferring its functions to the Council of Nationalities of the Central Executive Committee. What Lenin thought about Stalin is shown by the discussion that took place at the meeting where Lenin appointed Stalin as People's Commissariat of Nationalities. When Lenin proposed this appointment, one of the participants in the meeting proposed another candidate, proving that his candidate was an intelligent and intelligent person. Lenin interrupted him: "Well, you don't need smart people there, we'll send Stalin there."

Stalin was only listed as People's Commissar - he almost never showed up to his people's commissariats. On the fronts of the civil war, his anarchist activities are very controversial, and during the Polish war, when the entire offensive against Warsaw was thwarted because he and his armies did not follow the orders of the high command, it was simply harmful. And Stalin's real career begins only from the moment when Zinoviev and Kamenev, desiring to seize Lenin's inheritance and organizing the struggle against Trotsky, chose Stalin as an ally who must be in the party apparatus. Zinoviev and Kamenev did not understand only one simple thing - the party apparatus went automatically and spontaneously to power. Stalin was put on this car, and it was enough for him just to stay on it - the car itself carried him to power. But to tell the truth, Stalin also realized that the car was carrying him up, and for his part did everything that was necessary for this.

The conclusion suggests itself that in Stalin's party career before 1925, his shortcomings played a much greater role than his merits. Lenin introduced him to the Central Committee in his majority, not being afraid of any competition from the uncultured and politically small Stalin. But for the same reason, Zinoviev and Kamenev made him general secretary: they considered Stalin a politically insignificant person, they saw him as a convenient assistant, but not a rival.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Stalin is a completely immoral person. Lenin was already an immoral subject, moreover, he contemptuously rejected for himself and for his professional revolutionaries all those moral qualities that, according to the traditions of our old Christian civilization, we tend to consider the necessary cement that makes the life of society possible and tolerable: decency, honesty, loyalty to the word, tolerance, truthfulness, etc. According to Lenin, all this is bourgeois morality, which is rejected; only that which serves the social revolution is moral, in

other words, that which is useful and beneficial to the Communist Party. Stalin turned out to be a student who surpassed the teacher. Carefully examining his life and his behavior, it is difficult to find any human traits in them. The only thing that I could note in this sense is some paternal affection for my daughter, Svetlana. And then up to a certain point. And besides that, probably nothing. Rudeness of Stalin. She was rather natural and came from his lack of culture.

However, Stalin knew how to control himself very well and was rude only when he did not consider it necessary to be polite. Interesting observations that I could make in his secretariat. With his secretaries, he was not deliberately rude, but if, for example, he called, and the courier was absent (she carried, for example, papers somewhere), and Mehlis or Kanner appeared in his office, Stalin said only one word: "tea" or "matches". The assistants called him "you" and called him not by his first name and patronymic, but turning to him, they said "comrade Stalin." He said "you" to Tovstukha, and Mekhlis, and Kanner. Only he said "you" to me, and I was the youngest of all. He did not have any affection for any of his employees, but he valued them according to their degrees of usefulness; and I must say that everyone rendered him great services - Kanner in almost criminal cases, Tovstukha also in rather gloomy cases, Mekhlis, whom he did not really appreciate at first, did everything necessary to make Stalin "great and brilliant." And I was very needed as a secretary of the Politburo. Still, the attitude towards me was not the same as towards others. The rest of the assistants were "his" people, loyal and holding on to their places. I was not "my own", I didn't have any loyalty or respect for Stalin, and I represented some mystery to him - I didn't cling to either a place or involvement in power at all. Only once did he try to be rude to me. It was at a meeting of the Politburo.

As always, I write down the resolutions on a cardboard card and pass it across the table to him, and he, after reading it, returns it to me. Due to some disagreement with members of the Politburo (who had nothing to do with me), he became angry and wanted to show the members of the Politburo his bad mood. To do this, he did not find anything better than not to return the cards to me across the table, but to throw them across the table. My reaction was immediate - I didn't pass the next card across the table to him either, but threw it away. He looked at me in surprise and immediately stopped throwing cards. He completely ceased to understand me when one fine day, as a result of

my internal evolution, having become an anti-communist, I lost the desire to be a useful cog in this Politburo machine. I told him that I would like to go to work at Narkomfin (Sokolnikov offered me to head the Financial and Economic Bureau of Narkomfin, which replaced the Academic Council of the tsarist Ministry of Finance). Stalin was surprised: "Why?" Of course, I could not tell him the real reason, and I replied that I would like to improve myself in public affairs of the financial and economic order. He replied that I could do this by continuing my work, and she would only benefit from it. "And then, the party entrusts you with a very important and responsible job; There is no reason to refuse it." I also started working at the Narkomfin (I will tell about this later), but for Stalin, for whom power was everything, my indifference to power and my willingness to leave it was a mystery. He saw that he did not understand something in me. Maybe that's why he was always superbly polite to me. In those days (20s), Stalin leads a very simple way of life. He is always dressed in a simple semi-military suit, boots, and a military overcoat. He has no attraction to any luxury or

enjoyment of the blessings of life. He lives in the Kremlin, in a small, simply furnished apartment, where the palace servants used to live. While Kamenev, for example, already knows a lot about cars and has secured an excellent Rolls-Royce, Stalin drives a powerful but simple Russo-Balta (however, there are no roads for cars, you can drive almost only in Moscow, and go beyond the city is possible only along almost one Leningrad highway). Of course, for him, as for other Bolshevik leaders, the question of money does not play any practical role. They have everything without money - an apartment, a car, railway travel, vacations in resorts, etc. Food is prepared in the dining room of the Council of People's Commissars and delivered to their homes.

The usual regular meetings of the Politburo began in the morning and ended in the afternoon. The members of the Politburo dispersed for lunch, and I remained in the meeting room to formulate and write down resolutions on the last issues under discussion. Having done this, I went to Stalin. Usually at this time he began to dine. At the table were he, his wife Nadia and the eldest son Yashka (from his first wife, nee Svanidze). Stalin looked through the cards, and I went to the Central Committee to finish the protocol.

The first time I went to his dinner, he poured a glass of wine and offered it to me. "I don't drink, Comrade Stalin." - "Well, a glass of wine, it's possible; and this is good, Kakhetian" - "I have never drunk anything alcoholic and I don't drink it." Stalin was surprised: "Well, to my health." I refused to drink and for his health. He never served me wine again.

But it often happened that, leaving the Politburo meeting room, Stalin did not go straight home, but, walking around the Kremlin, continued talking with one of the participants in the meeting. In such cases, when I came to his house, I had to wait for him. Here I met and talked with his wife, Nadia Alliluyeva, whom I simply called Nadia. I got to know each other quite closely and even a few! made friends.

Nadia was nothing like Stalin. She was a very good, decent and honest person. She was not beautiful, but she had a sweet, open and pretty face. She was about my age, but looked older, and at first I thought she was a few years older than me. It is known that she was the daughter of the St. Petersburg Bolshevik worker Alliluyev, with whom Lenin was hiding in 1917 before the Bolshevik coup. From Stalin she had a son, Vasily (at that time he was five years old), then, three years later, another daughter, Svetlana.

When I met Nadia, I had the impression that there was some kind of emptiness around her - she somehow had no female friends at that time, and the male audience was afraid to approach her - suddenly Stalin would suspect that they were courting his wife, - will live with the world. I had a clear feeling that the wife of an almost dictator needs the simplest human relations. Of course, I didn't even think about courting her (I already had my own romance at that time, which completely absorbed me). Gradually she told me how her life goes.

Her home life was difficult. Stalin was a tyrant at home. Constantly restraining himself in business relations with people, he did not stand on ceremony with his family. More than once Nadya said to me, sighing: "For the third day he has been silent, does not talk to anyone and does not answer when he is addressed; extraordinarily difficult person. But I tried to avoid talking about Stalin - I already imagined what Stalin was, poor Nadia, apparently, was just beginning to discover his immorality and inhumanity and did not want to believe in these

discoveries herself. After some time, Nadia disappeared, as it turned out later, she went to spend the last months of her new pregnancy with her parents in Leningrad. When she returned and I saw her, she told me: "Here, admire my masterpiece." The masterpiece was three months old, it was a wrinkled lump. It was Svetlana. I was allowed, as a sign of special trust, to hold her in my arms (not for long, a quarter of a minute - these men are so awkward).

After I left Stalin's secretariat, I met Nadya rarely and by chance. When Ordzhonikidze became chairman of the Central Control Commission, he took on Nadya as third secretary; the first was the good-natured giant Trainin. Once I went to Ordzhonikidze's, I met Nadya for the last time. We had a long and friendly talk with her. Working for Ordzhonikidze, she came to life - the atmosphere here was pleasant, Sergo was a good person. He also took part in the conversation; he was with me on you, which embarrassed me a little - he was twenty years older than me (however, he was on you with everyone to whom he had the slightest sympathy). I never saw Nadia again.

Her tragic end is known, but probably not in full detail. She went to study at the Industrial Academy. Despite the loud name, these were simply courses for retraining and raising the culture of local communists from workers and peasants who were directors and heads of industrial enterprises, but because of their illiteracy, they did not do their job well. It was 1932, when Stalin launched a giant all-Russian meat grinder - forced collectivization, when millions of peasant families were sent to concentration camps for extermination in inhuman conditions. Students of the Academy, people who came from the localities, saw with their own eyes this terrible rout of the peasantry. Of course, having learned that the new listener was Stalin's wife, they firmly closed their mouths. But it gradually became clear that Nadya was an excellent person, a kind and sympathetic soul; saw that she could be trusted. The tongues loosened, and they began to tell her what was really happening in the country (previously, she could only read false and pompous reports in Soviet newspapers about brilliant victories on the agricultural front). Nadia was horrified

and rushed to share her information with Stalin. I imagine how he accepted her - he never hesitated to call her a fool and an idiot in disputes. Stalin, of course, claimed that her information was false and that it was counter-revolutionary propaganda. "But all the witnesses say the same thing." - "All?" Stalin asked. "No," answered Nadia, "only one says that all this is not true. But he obviously prevaricates and says this out of cowardice; this is the secretary of the cell of the Academy - Nikita Khrushchev. Stalin remembered this surname. In the ongoing disputes at home, Stalin, arguing that the statements quoted by Nadya were unfounded, demanded that she name the names: then it would be possible to verify that their testimonies were true. Nadia gave the names of her interlocutors. If she had any more doubts about what Stalin was, then they were the last. All listeners who trusted her were arrested and shot. Shocked, Nadya finally understood with whom she had joined her life, and, probably, what communism was; and shot herself. Of course, I was not a witness to what was said here; but I understand its end according to the data that have come down to us.

And Comrade Khrushchev began his brilliant career from this period. The very first time when re-elections of district committees and their secretaries took place in the Moscow Organization, Stalin told the secretary of the Moscow Committee: "You have an excellent worker there - the secretary of the cell of the Industrial Academy - Nikita Khrushchev; nominate him for secretary of the district committee." At that time, Stalin's word was already law, and Khrushchev immediately became the secretary of the district committee, I think Krasnopresnensky, and then very soon the secretary of the Moscow Party Committee. So went up Nikita Khrushchev, who reached the very top

authorities.

His eldest son, from his first marriage, Yakov, also lived in Stalin's apartment. For some reason, he was never called anything other than Yashka. He was a very reserved, silent and secretive young man; he was four years younger than me. He looked busy. I was struck by one of his features, which can be called nervous deafness. He was always immersed in some kind of secret inner experiences. You could turn to him and say - he did not hear you, he looked absent. Then he suddenly reacted that they were talking to him, he caught himself and heard everything well. Stalin did not like him and oppressed him in every possible way.

Yashka wanted to study - Stalin sent him to work at the factory as a worker. He hated his father with a secret and deep hatred. He always tried to remain unnoticed, did not play any role before the war. Mobilized and sent to the front, he was captured by the Germans. When the German authorities offered Stalin to exchange some major German general for his son, who was in their captivity, Stalin replied: "I have no son." Yashka remained in captivity and at the end of the German retreat was shot by the Gestapo.

I almost never saw Stalin's son from Nadia - Vasily. Then he was a baby; growing up, he became a degenerate alcoholic. The story of Svetlana is well known. Like her mother, she understood what Stalin represented, and, by the way, communism, and, having fled abroad, dealt a strong blow to communist propaganda ("Well, and the regime: Stalin's own daughter could not stand it and fled"). Of course, summarizing everything that has been said about Stalin, it can be argued that he was an immoral person with criminal inclinations. But I think that the case of Stalin raises another, much more important question: why could such a person show all his criminal inclinations, exterminating millions of people with impunity for a quarter of a century? Alas, there is only one answer to this. The communist system created and promoted Stalin. The communist system, which represents the all-embracing and continuous incitement of hatred and calls for the extermination of entire groups and classes of the population, creates such a climate when its holders of power portray all their activities as a fight against some imaginary enemies - classes, counter-revolutionaries, saboteurs, explaining all the failures of their an absurd and inhuman system as the intrigues and resistance of imaginary enemies and tirelessly calling for repression, for extermination, for suppression (of everything: thought, freedom, truth, human feelings). On such soil, Stalins can flourish luxuriantly.

When the leadership is convinced that at the same time she herself has to live with a revolver at the back of her head, she decides to unscrew the nut a little, but not very much, and vigilantly watching to

everything in the system remains the same. This is what happened after Stalin.

When I understood Lenin and Stalin well, I had to ask myself: is the communist government doing the right thing by calling the "lesson" a *"socially close element"* ? It would not be more correct to say: *"A morally close element"*.

Chapter 10. Members of the Politburo. Trotsky

TROTSKY. HIS QUALITIES. SPEAKER. COURAGE. POSE. ORGANIZER. People's Commissariat. RED ARMY. THEORIST. THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION. SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY. MAIN PROBLEM. "NON-BOLSHEVISM" OF TROTSKY. SOCIALISM WITH A WOLF'S Muzzle. TROTSKY'S NAIVETY.

When Trotsky wrote about me, he was almost always unfair: I am an anti-communist, which means an enemy, a "reactionary", and according to the Bolshevik code, you can not stand on ceremony with me. I do not want to repay him in kind and will try to be objective in describing him.

Of the Bolshevik leaders, Trotsky impressed me as the larger and more gifted one. But justice requires immediately to say that he was by no means gifted comprehensively and, along with outstanding qualities, had considerable shortcomings.

He was an excellent orator, but an orator of the revolutionary type - incendiary agitator. He knew how to find and throw the right slogan, spoke with great fervor and pathos, and ignited the audience. But he knew how to completely control his word, and at meetings of the Politburo, where usually no pathos was supposed to be, he spoke with restraint and businesslike.

Trotsky had a very sharp pen, he was a capable, lively and temperamental publicist. He was a man of

courage and took all the risks associated with his revolutionary activities. Suffice it to point to his behavior when he presided in 1905 at the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' Deputies; to the end he behaved bravely and defiantly and went straight from the chairman's rostrum to prison and exile.

But even more revealing is the story of the "Clemence thesis" of 1927. The power was already entirely in the hands of Stalin, who continued the hype with the opposition, revealing (as I wrote above) hidden enemies. At the November plenum of the Central Committee of 1927, at which Stalin proposed eventually expelling Trotsky from the party, Trotsky took the floor and, incidentally, said, addressing Stalin's group (I convey the meaning): "You are a group of incompetent bureaucrats. If the question of the fate of the Soviet country arises, if a war breaks out, you will be completely powerless to organize the defense of the country and achieve victory. Then, when the enemy is 100 kilometers from Moscow, we will do what Clemenceau did in his time - we will overthrow the mediocre government; but with this difference, that Clemenceau was satisfied with the seizure of power, and we, moreover, will shoot this stupid gang of worthless bureaucrats who have betrayed the revolution. Yes, we will. You, too, would like to shoot us, but you dare not. And we will dare, as this will be an absolutely necessary condition for victory. Of course, there is a lot of naivete and misunderstanding of Stalin in this speech, but how can one not take one's hat off to this speech?

Thanks to Trotsky's temperament, his courage and his determination, he was undoubtedly a man of acute critical moments, when he took responsibility and went to the end. That is why he played such a role during the October Revolution, when he was the indispensable executor of Lenin's plan to seize power; The Stalins hid somewhere, the Kamenevs and Zinovievs retreated and opposed the risk, and Trotsky went to the end and boldly led the action (by the way, Ilyich did not show great courage and immediately yielded to the arguments of those around him that he should not risk his precious life, and hurried hide; and Trotsky did not yield to these arguments; just as before, after the unsuccessful June uprising, Lenin immediately disappeared, and Trotsky did not flee, but went to Kerensky's prison.) But here one must also point out one important shortcoming of Trotsky. He was too man of posture. Convinced that he has entered History, he is all the time for this

Stories (with a capital letter) posed. This was not always successful. Sometimes it was a big posture justified by the role played by Trotsky and his social revolution in world events; for example, when Soviet power hung in the balance during the civil war - "We will leave, but we will slam the door so hard that the whole world will shudder" - this is also for the pose and for history; sometimes it was less justified; it was still tolerable when Trotsky received the parades of his Red Army, standing on an armored car; but it also happened that the pose was out of place and was ridiculous. Trotsky did not always notice this - remember, for example, the case with the door at the Plenum of the Central Committee, which I described above.

The strategy of the civil war was directed, of course, more by Lenin than by Trotsky. But Trotsky undoubtedly played a very important role in the organization of the Red Army. Here it is necessary to note one feature characteristic of more than one Trotsky. In the process of governing the country, individual parties in the organization of the struggle and the economy, capable people quickly grew and learned. Krasins, Sokolnikovs and Syrtsovs became more and more statesmen every year. In the public school, even the less able grew up and learned. For example, the notorious Mikhalvanych Kalinin, whom Lenin introduced to the Politburo partly for the sake of the majority, partly in order to constantly have at hand a person who knows the village and the psychology of the peasants - in this sense he rendered undoubted services. But when he tried to take part in a debate that required some knowledge and culture, at first he spoke such nonsense that the members of the Politburo involuntarily smiled. And what? After two or three years, Mikhalvanych became much wiser, figured out a lot, and, not being deprived of common sense by nature, often spoke very sensibly and ceased to be a comedian of the troupe.

The capable Trotsky, who at the beginning was a talented agitator, also grew greatly in organizational and leadership work. But it failed more than once. After the end of the civil war, when transport was completely destroyed and the railway workers, who received practically no salary, had to cultivate vegetables and engage in bagging in order not to die of hunger, they had no time to deal with trains, and trains did not run, Lenin appointed Trotsky People's Commissar Ways of communication (not without a bad ulterior motive - to put Trotsky in a stupid position). Upon taking office, Trotsky wrote a pathetic order: "Comrade railroad workers! The country and the revolution are perishing from the collapse of transport. We will die at our railway post, but let the trains run!" There were more exclamation points in the order than fate releases for another clerk for life. Comrade railway workers preferred not to die at the railway post, but to live somehow, and for this it was necessary to plant potatoes and sack. The railroad workers were bagging, the trains were not running, and Lenin, having achieved his goal, stopped the embarrassment by removing Trotsky from the post of the People's Commissariat of the Way. There is no doubt that at the beginning of the organization of the Red Army by

Trotsky, everything went in slogans and speeches, about soldiers' committees, elected commanders, stupidity, demagoguery and banditry. But Trotsky soon realized that no army could be created without a minimum of military knowledge and without a minimum of discipline. He attracted specialists - old officers of the tsarist army; some were bought by high officials, others were simply mobilized and forced to give their skills under the strict supervision of communist commissars. And in the struggle for discipline, the entire civil war had to be fought against the Stalins and the Voroshilovs. And Trotsky himself learned a lot at the same time and gradually turned from an agitator into an organizer. But he still did not achieve great heights in this matter: not to mention the embarrassment with transport, when he had to organize a struggle for power, Trotsky did not create anything sensible here, and in terms of organization, the mediocre Molotovs beat him along the entire line. True, Trotsky believed that the most important thing in this political struggle was the big questions of political strategy, the "politics of the long run", the struggle in the sphere of ideas. Here he clearly followed Lenin, trying to copy Lenin's schemes and Lenin's recipes, clearly demonstrating his weakness in comparison with Lenin, who, of course, was engaged, and was very much engaged, in questions of political strategy, but attached no less importance to organizational issues (in the St. 1917 organization played a greater role than politics).

Here we have to touch on another weakness of Trotsky - his weakness as

theorist and thinker. I

would say that Trotsky is the type of believing fanatic. Trotsky believed in Marxism; believing then in his Leninist interpretation. I believed firmly and for life. He never showed any doubts in dogma and hesitations. He walked firmly in his faith. He could only capitulate to the whole party, which he considered the perfect instrument of the world revolution, but he never abandoned his ideas and firmly believed in them to the end of his days; believed with fanaticism. From people of this type come the Francis of Assisi, and Peter the Hermits, and Savonarola; but also Trotskys and Hitlers. Not theorists, not thinkers, such fanatics have a much greater influence on the fate of mankind than the pillars of reason and wisdom. If we try to reconstruct what Trotsky's main political thought was, it is not so easy to make

sense of the mountain of false accusations that was incessantly piled up against him, first by the Zinovievites, then by the Stalinists, then by the Stalinist heirs. In any case, already at the time when this struggle was taking place within the party, and I was a witness to it, for me, as for all the Bolshevik leaders, the falsity and far-fetchedness of most of the disagreements was clear. It was necessary to defeat the opponent and seize power. But it was impossible to look like this was an unprincipled struggle of spiders in a jar. It was necessary to pretend that the struggle was highly ideological and that the disagreements were extremely important: almost the entire future of the revolution allegedly depended on one or another of their decisions.

Meanwhile, usually these were vague disputes about words. In particular, many such empty and tendentious disputes were held around Trotsky's famous theory of "permanent revolution" and Stalin's "building of socialism in one country." In fact, Trotsky's idea was that with the October Revolution in Russia, an era of world social revolution began, which would flare up in other countries as well. Always keeping this goal in mind, we must regard communist Russia as a springboard, a base that makes it possible to conduct and continue preparatory revolutionary work in other countries. This does not mean at all that, bearing in mind the goal of the world revolution, one can not attach any importance to what will happen in Russia. On the contrary, according to Trotsky, it is necessary to actively build communism in Russia; but in his opinion (and it must be said that Lenin fully shared this opinion before the revolution), one isolated Russian revolution would hardly withstand the onslaught of the other "capitalist" countries for long, which would try to suppress it by force of arms. It is quite clear that although Trotsky was expelled, killed, convicted and anathematized, this general idea of a permanent world

revolution has always continued to be carried out by Russian communism, continues to be carried out and will always be the main strategic line of communism. True, under the pressure of facts and experience, Russian communism had to revise some of the initial pessimistic forecasts of Lenin and

Trotsky. The leaders of the major "capitalist" powers not only, contrary to all common sense, did not overthrow Russian communism by force of arms, but betraying Western civilization, like Churchill and Roosevelt, they did everything to save communism when danger began to threaten it, and did everything so that it would capture half the world and became the main global threat to humanity. It was indeed very difficult to foresee such a degree of betrayal and political cretinism; here I must intercede for Lenin and Trotsky: they made assumptions based on the fact that they are dealing with normal and sane opponents. How can one not quote the talented Russian poet Georgy Ivanov here:

To tell you about all the world's fools,
That the fate of mankind is held in their
hands. To tell you about all the world's
scoundrels, What go down in history in bright crowns.

The disputes about the Stalinist theory of "building socialism in one country" have exactly the same character of far-fetchedness. Stalin, wanting to pretend that he also had mainly ideological

disagreements with Trotsky, at the beginning of 1925 he accused Trotsky of not attaching importance, "does not believe" in the possibility of building socialism in one country, that is, in Russia, where the communist revolution had already been made. Unfortunately, at this moment (March 1925), a squabble began again between Zinoviev and Stalin: Zinoviev did not tolerate Stalin's excursions into the field of general strategy and found his attempts to act as a theoretician and strategist ridiculous. There were skirmishes at the March plenum, and Stalin took revenge on Zinoviev by showing him that a majority in the Central Committee was worth more than any strategy. At the plenum, Zinoviev's theses to the Executive Committee of the Comintern were rejected on the absurd grounds of a dispute over words - whether we are talking about the "final" victory of socialism or not. In April, Zinoviev and Kamenev doubled their attacks on the Politburo against Stalinist socialism in one country - it was necessary to prevent Stalin from putting his candidacy for strategists and leaders of the revolution. At the end of April, Stalin convened the XIV Party Conference, at which this

issue was discussed in depth. Again, the disputes were about words and were far-fetched. Can socialism be built in one country? The question, after all, was whether his enemies were overthrown by force of arms. In the eighth year of the revolution, one could already see that no one was going to overthrow him yet. Should this be made into a symbol of faith? What's the point of this? Or consider that for the time being it is necessary to strengthen, and then it will be seen, this, in essence, did not matter. And how much later, having quarreled with Stalin, Zinoviev poured a block of ink on Stalin, proving that he was not a revolutionary, abandoned the world revolution and mired onl

In addition to all this far-fetched, there were, of course, problems of capital importance. The most important one that arose in 1925-1926 was whether to continue the NEP, the peaceful competition between "capitalist" (that is, free market, economic freedom and initiative) and communist elements, or to return to the politics of 1918-1919 and introduce communism by force. The lives of tens of millions of people depended on which path the authorities would take.

In practice, this was primarily a question of the countryside. To give the opportunity to somehow slowly evolve the peasantry and its economy, without destroying them, or to crush the peasantry without stopping at anything (according to Marxist dogma, the peasantry are small proprietors, a petty-bourgeois element). Here, of course, there was also the question of whether it is possible to do this. Lenin feared that the authorities did not have sufficient strength, and preferred a gradual solution with the voluntary and slow involvement of the peasantry in the collective farms ("cooperatives"). Now, according to Stalin, the gigantic police apparatus (based on the army) has reached such strength that the creation of the desired all-Russian penal servitude was possible.

But what is the best way? The practitioners Bukharin and Rykov, who had learned something, believed that it was necessary to continue the Leninist path of the NEP. In April 1925, at a meeting of Moscow activists, Bukharin made his famous statement that "collectivization is not a high road to socialism" and that one should bet on the development of the peasant economy, throwing even the peasants the slogan "enrich yourself!". Strictly speaking, it was a choice: whether to follow the path of human common sense (and then this path is not communist) or to follow the path of a communist meat grinder. It is characteristic that the most talented Bukharins, Sokolnikovs, Krasins, Syrtsovs understood (as, apparently, Lenin also understood) that there was a failure of communism and that it was necessary to move on to the path of common sense. Ardent fanatics like Trotsky, dishonest strategists who sought only power like Zinoviev, and a completely immoral public like Stalin, for various reasons, agreed on the same thing: to continue the introduction of communism by force.

But this did not happen immediately. In 1925, the Zinoviev clan had nothing against the Bukharin position. It took him to be removed from power in 1926 so that he made a volt-face and began to defend Trotsky's recipes for super-industrialization and pressure on the countryside. And Stalin, not particularly delving into ideas, more subordinated everything to his combinations. In 1926, having thrown out Zinoviev and Kamenev, he supported Bukharin's position against them. And until the end of 1927, smashing the Zinoviev-Trotskyist bloc, he held this position. But at the end of 1927, he decides to get rid of the old members of the Politburo - Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsy. And then, without any embarrassment, he takes the whole policy of Zinoviev and Trotsky, which he constantly condemned and smashed. Now he is both for super-industrialization and for violent

collectivization and destruction of the countryside. And when the December Congress of 1927 finally gives him a firm and unshakable majority in the Central Committee (the fruit of many years of tireless work), he accepts this attempt, throws out the old members of the Politburo, and now calmly marches through the mountains of corpses towards his communism.

In essence, the paths of Stalin and Trotsky converged here. Trotsky is also a communist, consistent and inaccessible to common sense. Meanwhile, we must

remember that even in his will, Lenin wrote about Trotsky's "non-Bolshevism" (which he, however, advised him not to particularly blame). In fact, this means that before the revolution, Trotsky never belonged to Lenin's party of professional revolutionaries. It is known that, having arrived in Russia after the February Revolution, he first joined the group of "mezhraiontsy", with whom in the summer of 1917 he eventually joined the Leninist organization. That is, Trotsky was not a Bolshevik before the revolution. I must say that this is a big compliment. The members of the Leninist Bolshevik organization were a public mired in intrigues, bickering, slander, a company of immoral parasites. Trotsky could not stand either the mores or the morality of this company. And he even lived not at the expense of the party fund and bourgeois benefactors, like Lenin, but earned his living by working as a journalist (even before the war, I read his articles in *Kievskaya Mysl*). Not accepting the specific morality of Lenin, he was, unlike him, a decent person. Although both a fanatic and an intolerant person in his faith, he was by no means devoid of human feelings - fidelity in friendship, truthfulness, elementary honesty. He really was not a Leninist Bolshevik. When I already knew him well, I learned with surprise that he was the son of a peasant. Strange as it may seem, in the 80s of the last century there were still Jewish peasants in Russia who plowed the land and lived by peasant labor. So was his father. He was a good peasant (according to the Bolshevik savage terminology - a fist, in human terms - a diligent, hard-working and prosperous peasant). What effect did this proximity to the countryside and the truth of nature have on Trotsky? One can only guess. But Trotsky also confronted me with a great human problem. Having left communism and continuing to think about communism, I involuntarily asked myself some general questions. In particular this one. Our time is filled with the struggle of communism with the old Christian civilization. This is how I defined its

social essence. Twenty centuries ago, during the Roman Empire, man was a wolf to man. Christianity came and offered: "Why don't we organize human society in such a way that a person is not a wolf to a person, but a friend and

brother?" This is the whole social significance of Christianity (I do not touch here at all on its extremely important religious aspect). And over the course of twenty centuries, for better or worse, these ideas nevertheless entered the consciousness as an ideal to which one must strive (and the socialist idea generated by Christianity, of course, in its real, not Marxist form, came out from here), but the human nature is bad; the long development of these ideas did not prevent even in the twentieth century the advanced Christian nations from exterminating each other by the millions. In any case, our entire centuries-old civilization has tried to lead us to this ideal. Communism and Marxism are its direct negation. Here murder, violence, mass extermination are introduced into the law. Man is a wolf to man again. And the Communist Party, the apparatus for creating this new society, or, if you like, wolf-faced socialism, is itself built on the principle of a wolf pack. Here there is no friend, no brother, there is only a "comrade". What is a "comrade"? This is the one who walks next to you (the wolf is also a friend to the wolf); but until a certain moment; he can walk with you for twenty years to participate in battles and hardships with you, but if he violated the law of the wolf pack or for some reason began to not fit the pack, they attack him and instantly kill him (does this remind you of anything from the history of the Communist Party?): he is not a friend, not a brother, he is only a "comrade" no more.

Why and why does communism so resolutely reject the idea of friendship and brotherhood between people? Why does he seek to establish this wolf kingdom? And why does he win, why do they follow him? Doubt begins to confuse my not so sophisticated youth. Or maybe in general the ideal of brotherhood is a completely unrealizable utopia; maybe a bright dream born in the land of Galilee is nothing more than a dream condemned by history?

I know that a man has always been a brute and a rapist, whether for centuries a soldier, a hunter, a wild nomad and even a farmer, always in the fight against dangers, enemies, nature, wild animals of neighbors, always a killer. The Christian idea found a direct response rather among women. By her very biological essence, a woman who gives and continues life is prone to love, care for the weak; her whole life is a continuous self-sacrifice for her children. The Christian idea of love and pity is close to her. I am convinced that Christianity won against

the iron legions of Rome thanks to a woman. And perhaps violence is more suitable for the male gender, this wolf world that communism establishes with such success?

Here is Trotsky, a convinced and sincere man. When the communists claim that they are turning the world upside down in order to abolish the exploitation of man by man, it is ridiculously clear that this is a lie. At the first opportunity and without the slightest hesitation, they replace what they call capitalist exploitation (as if the worker is not paid extra for his work) by such socialist exploitation as the worker never dreamed of before. We are no longer talking about extra pay, we are talking about the free labor of millions of convicts, about their inhuman extermination. But Trotsky is a sincere man and a believer in his ideas. After all, he understands that all this is a lie. How was he, along with Lenin, the inspirer of terror, as he suggested "labour armies" with iron discipline, where refusal to work would mean immediate execution? Meanwhile, Trotsky is not devoid of human qualities. He is a good family man, he loves his children very much, who

bow before him, are devoted to him and blindly follow him. I knew his daughter Zina, who was very similar to him, a thin and fragile young woman with tuberculosis, just as excited and flaring as her father. Her father was everything to her. She, of course, died in Stalin's prisons.

And one more feature has always struck me in Trotsky - his amazing naivety and misunderstanding of people. You might think that he went through his whole life, seeing only abstractions and not seeing living people as they are. In particular, he did not understand anything about Stalin, about whom he wrote a thick book.

In 1930, while abroad, I wrote about the expulsion of Trotsky from the USSR, that I was very surprised and did not recognize my Stalin, whom I studied so well. It was much more in his manners to deal with Trotsky, as, for example, with Frunze. Stalin has at his disposal any number of ways to poison Trotsky (well, not directly, it would be signed, but with the help of viruses, cultures of microbes, radioactive substances), and then bury him with pomp in Red Square and make speeches. Instead, he sent him abroad. I ended my presentation like this: "In general, it is not clear why Stalin did not follow his usual method, which is so in keeping with his habits and his character. But in the end it is quite possible that Stalin finds it more profitable to kill Trotsky not in the USSR, but abroad.

This was written in 1930. In 1940, Trotsky's last work was a book about Stalin, which death prevented him from finishing. He managed to write 584 pages of this book. Consequently, he wrote pages 579 and 580 probably in the last days or weeks of his life. Here is what he writes on these pages: "Regarding my deportation in February 1929 to Turkey, Bazhanov writes ..." Then there is a half-page quote from my book. Following this, Trotsky continues: "In 1930, when Bazhanov's book appeared, I regarded it as a simple literary exercise. After the Moscow trials, I took her more seriously. And then he gives conjectures that in the Stalinist secretariat, which I left in 1926, I heard and know something about this. That is, what was clear to me back in 1930 and what I had no doubt about, namely, that Stalin would kill him at the right moment (and with the outbreak of the war, this took on the character of urgency for Stalin). Trotsky "began to be taken seriously" only shortly before his death. And for this it was still necessary to assume that Bazhanov heard something in the Stalinist secretariat in 1926. Couldn't you just figure out what Stalin was? What amazing naivete and what misunderstanding of people!

Chapter 11. Members of the Politburo

ZINOVEV. KAMENEV. RYKOV. TOMSKY. BUKHARIN. "REHABILITATION". KALININ. MOLOTOV.

For three years, Grigory Evseevich Zinoviev was the No. 1 of communism, and then for ten years he gradually descended into the basement of the Lubyanka, where he ended his life. Having replaced Lenin as leader, he was still not accepted by the party, like a real leader. At first glance, it might seem that this made it easier for him to defeat. In fact, victory or defeat in this struggle for power was determined by other reasons than popularity, than the recognition of superiority. Among these reasons, there are also very important, but still little taken into account, but this will be discussed further.

Zinoviev was an intelligent and cultured man; a clever intriguer, he went through a long Leninist pre-revolutionary Bolshevik school. A decent coward, he was never inclined to run the risks of the underground, and before the revolution, almost all of his activities took place abroad. In the summer of 1917, he was also not very keen on the risk of a revolutionary upheaval and took a stand against Lenin. But after the revolution, Lenin forgave him rather quickly and at the beginning of 1919 put him at the head of the Comintern.

Since that time, Zinoviev prudently takes the position of Lenin's disciple and follower. This position was also convenient for claiming Lenin's legacy. But in no respect, neither in the sense of theory, nor in the sense of big politics, nor in the sphere of the organizational aspect of the struggle, did Zinoviev rise to the occasion. As a theoretician, he gave nothing; the attempts of 1925-1926 (the philosophy of the era according to Zinoviev is the desire for equality) did not fit either with the goals or with the practice of communism and were accepted by the party with indifference. In the field of grand political strategy, he subordinated everything to the petty tactics of the struggle for power, fiercely trying to reject everything that Trotsky said, and thrown from power immediately accepted all the positions of Trotsky (directly opposite) in order to unite with him against Stalin. Finally, in the field of organization, he only managed to firmly seize the second capital, Leningrad, into his hands; but this was too insufficient for success. He also held the Comintern in his hands; but that was even less important. Anyone who was the master in the Kremlin could put anyone in charge of the Comintern (at one time Stalin even put Molotov). Having nominated Stalin to the post of general

secretary of the party in the spring of 1922, Zinoviev believed that the positions that he himself held in the Comintern and in the Politburo were clearly more important than the position at the head of the party apparatus. It was a miscalculation and misunderstanding of the processes taking place in the party, which concentrated power in the hands of the apparatus. In particular, one thing for the people who fought for power should be quite clear. To be in power, it was necessary to have a majority in the Central Committee. But the Central Committee is elected by the party congress. In order to elect your own Central Committee, you had to have your own majority at the congress. And for this it was necessary to have behind him the majority of the delegations to the congress from the provincial, regional and territorial party organizations. Meanwhile, these delegations are not so much selected as selected by the leaders of the local party apparatus - the secretary of the provincial committee and his closest employees. Pick up and seat your people as secretaries and main workers of the provincial committees, and in this way you will have a majority at the congress. It is this selection that Stalin and Molotov have been systematically engaged in for several years now. Not everywhere it goes smoothly and easily. For example, the path of the Central Committee of Ukraine, which has several provincial committees, is complex and difficult. We have to combine, displace, move, then put Kaganovich on the Central Committee of Ukraine, so that he put things in order in the apparatus, then move, nominate and remove obstinate Ukrainian workers. But in 1925, the main thing in this seating of people was done. Zinoviev will see this when it is already too late. It seemed that it was

possible to figure out the meaning of this Stalinist work earlier. At the 1924 congress, Zinoviev for the second time (and the last) makes his leadership political report to the Central Committee. A few days before the congress, he obviously does not yet know what he will report on. He asks me if I can make him an analysis of the work of the Politburo for the past year. I do it and present it in the form of detailed materials for the congress about what the Politburo was mainly doing during the ye

big role as materials. Of course, they do not pretend to a big role. To my great surprise, Zinoviev seizes on these materials and roughly constructs his report in this way: "Here, comrades, this year we have been busy with this and that and have done this and that."

I am amazed. A real leader and leader had to highlight the main and key problems of the life of the country, the paths of the revolution. Instead, a shallow report. By chance, my materials serve as the canvas for this accounting report. I am convinced that Zinoviev has no real scope and real depth.

It is difficult to say why, but the party does not like Zinoviev. He has his shortcomings, he loves to enjoy the benefits of life, he always has a clan of his people with him; he is a coward; he is intriguing; politically he is a small man; but the rest around are not better, and many are much worse. The formulas that are in use in the party elite are not very favorable to him (but to Stalin?): "Beware of Zinoviev and Stalin: Stalin will betray, and Zinoviev will run away."

For all that, he has a common feature with Lenin and Stalin: he is keenly striving for power; Of course, with him this is not such an all-consuming passion as with Stalin, he is not averse to using his life, but nevertheless this belongs to the area of the most important thing in life, not at all like that of the unambitious Kamenev. To his

misfortune, Lev Borisovich Kamenev is on the occasion of Zinoviev, who captivates him and drags him into all political combinations. By himself, he is not a power-hungry, good-natured and rather "bourgeois" person. True, he is an old Bolshevik, but not a coward, he takes the risks of the revolutionary underground, he is arrested more than once; during the war in exile; liberated only by revolution. Here he falls into the orbit of Zinoviev and now always follows him, in particular, against Lenin's plan to seize power; then proposes the creation of a coalition government with other parties and resigns; but soon he again, following Zinoviev, appears on the surface, heading the Moscow Soviet, and then becomes extremely useful for Lenin as his deputy for all economic affairs. And with Lenin's illness, he actually manages the entire economic life. But Zinoviev draws him into the troika, and for three years he replaces Lenin in all practical leadership: he presides over the Politburo, presides over the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labor and Defense. He is a smart, educated person, with the talents of a good state worker (now they would say "technocrat"). If not for

communism, he would be a good socialist minister in a "capitalist" country.

He is married to Trotsky's sister, Olga Davydovna. His son, Lyutik, is still very young, but he is already widely treading the path which the Party calls "bourgeois corruption." Drinkers, enjoyment of position, young actresses. There are still people in the party who keep faith in the idea; they are outraged. Even the play "Son of the People's Commissar" was written, in which Lyutik Kamenev was introduced, and the play is being staged in one of the Moscow theaters; at the same time, from various details it is not difficult to guess who is at stake. Kanner receives a call from the Agitprop of the Central Committee for a directive; Kanner asks Stalin what to do with the play; Stalin says: "Let him go." Kamenev raises the question in the troika that the play should be banned - this is a clear discrediting of a member of the Politburo. Zinoviev says that it is better not to pay attention: by banning the play, Kamenev will sign that it is about him; Zinoviev recalls the story of "Lords Obmanovs" - the novel was not banned (before the war, under the tsarist regime, the revolutionary writer Amfiteatrov published a rather vile libel on the royal family - the Romanov family; and although there were a lot of details that made it clear who they were talking about, the tsar recognized below his dignity by prohibiting the novel to admit that it was about his family;

and the novel circulated freely). "Thank you, Heinrich," replies Kamenev (this is from Shakespeare); "And we know how it ended" (this is from Kamenev). In the end, it was decided not to ban the play, but to exert the necessary pressure to have it removed from the repertoire.

In the realm of intrigue, cunning, and tenacity, Kamenev is quite weak. Officially, he "sits in Moscow" - the capital is considered to be the same patrimony of his as Zinoviev's Leningrad. But Zinoviev organized his clan in Leningrad, seated him and holds his second capital in his hands. While Kamenev is a stranger to this technique, he has no clan of his own and sits on Moscow by inertia. We will soon see how he will lose it (along with everything else).

Olga Davydovna runs VOKS, a society for cultural relations with foreign countries, a place where subsidies are given to Soviet writers (trusted ones, such as Mayakovsky and Ehrenburg) who travel abroad to feed and admire the Soviet Potemkin villages to foreign writers and other "cultural figures" more revolutionary. The institution has the appearance of a large theatrical production. Olga Davydovna copes with it successfully. Of the other members of the Politburo, neither Rykov nor Tomsy are leaders

and do not claim leadership. Alexey Ivanovich Rykov before the revolution conducted underground work in Russia, and was with Lenin in exile. After the revolution, he became the Minister of the Interior, but this job is clearly not for him: the revolution needs a Cheka, a wall, Almaz. Rykov is a peaceful, intelligent and capable technocrat. He becomes chairman of the Supreme Council of the National Economy, and after the death of Lenin, the nominal head of the government. He has a weakness: he likes to drink. The population, however, calls vodka "rykovka". This offends him. Having drunk in a close circle of Soviet nobles, he says, stuttering as always: "I don't d-understand why they call her a r-rykovka?" He has no special talents or special shortcomings. Common sense is there for sure. He will destroy him when Stalin starts his nightmarish collectivization. Despite his moderation and caution, Rykov cannot agree with such a defeat of the countryside and agriculture. Then he will embark on the path of the opposition, and under Stalin this path leads to the Lubyanka basement; there he will come in 1938 after all the humiliating comedies that Stalin enjoys in the extermination of his victims. Misha Tomsy is at the head of the Soviet trade unions. He has been a member of the Central Committee since 1919, a

member of the Orgburo since 1921, and a member of the Politburo since 1922. He belongs to the number of cautious Central Committee members, does not take part in the struggle for power, goes over to the side of the winners (when the winners are already quite clear). He has a weak point - he becomes deaf, does not hear well, at meetings of the Politburo, on issues of particular interest to him, he stands in front of the speaker himself in order to hear what he says. He is colorless, just as the institution he represents is colorless in the Soviet system. Although he goes over to Stalin's side in time, the moment will come when he will begin to embarrass Stalin by the very fact that he is an old member of the Politburo of the Lenin era, who knows everything about Stalin, and, despite all the outward signs of submission, in his soul there are no qualities behind the "great and brilliant » leader not recognizing. And although Tomsy will try to stay away from the opposition hype, there will come a moment (1936) when Stalin decides that it is time to liquidate him too. However, he will not follow the usual path of Stalin's victims - when they come to arrest him, he will prefer to shoot himself.

Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin is one of the most capable members of the Politburo. The face of a radish, lively, witty, he attracts all the sympathies in the party. Even Lenin in his "testament" calls him the "favorite" of the party. He, too, is a long-time Bolshevik, he communicated with Lenin abroad, but managed not to get too bogged down in intrigues and petty behind-the-scenes struggles. He is first and foremost a man of the pen. Journalist, publicist. The editor-in-chief of Pravda, the central organ of the party, turned it into a newspaper that constantly sets the tone for the entire leadership line. He has been a member of the Central Committee for a long time, but he became a candidate member of the Politburo only after the tenth congress in 1921. Then he was elected the third candidate for the Politburo. But the following year after the congress, he became the first candidate, and since from that time Lenin practically dropped out of the Politburo and is absent from meetings, Bukharin participates in the work of the Politburo as a full member. In 1924, after Lenin's

death, he would become a member of the Politburo. An incorrect characterization of Bukharin as a scholastic and dogmatist is widespread in the party. In fact, he is not at all a dogmatist and not at all a theoretician. For the first two years of communism, believing (like all other leaders) that a new communist society was being built, he, possessing a good vulgarizer pen, wrote a work outlining all the Marxist nonsense "Economics in Transition" and then, together with Preobrazhensky, the very popular "ABC of Communism", according to which the entire party, and in particular the new party youth, learned communism. In essence, what is written in these books is what other leaders were saying at that time, up to and including Lenin. But when the rapid collapse of communism and

Lenin had to make the NEP turn, the rest of the leaders came out of this story with the advantage that they did not write such works, and Bukharin and his precocious communist society had to be disavowed and even these two books were secretly bought, collected and destroyed. And to Bukharin they stuck the label of an enthusiastic theoretician and dogmatist. In fact, he was just unlucky. His profession is to write. What others thought and said, he wrote. What was being done was changed, and "what is written with a pen cannot be cut down with an axe." And the oppositionists will rudely joke: "We have a wonderful Politburo: two stutterers (these are Molotov and Rykov, both stutter), one made a mistake (Bukharin) and one bouncer (this, of course, is Comrade Stalin). Meanwhile,

Bukharin is an intelligent and capable man. At meetings of the Politburo, he does not say any Marxist nonsense, but on the contrary, he speaks sensibly and efficiently. And it speaks, and jokes, and plays with thought. What he skillfully hides is the depth of his desire for power. Here he is a Leninist student, and the Leninist school did not pass without a trace for him. But in the present period, when everything is decided by taking over the party apparatus, it has no chance, except for being on the sidelines and participating in top party intrigues. In any case, the first difficult choice (between Zinoviev and Stalin) is easy for him - he passes this bottleneck with success - in the camp of the winner. At the Institute of the Red Professors, which is a

reserve of young party careerists who are extremely busy deciding which horse to bet on, the majority leans towards Bukharin. He impresses with his talent. Trotsky is also talented, but he is clearly beaten. Zinoviev is not considered a leader; they do not have any respect or trust for Stalin. Around Bukharin a group of young, rather cultured and often capable members of the party formed. Within a few years, while Bukharin is close to the heights, those cadres will be generously drawn from them where some culture is needed: from here will come the heads of the Agitprop and the Press Department of the Central Committee, and the editors of Pravda, and leaders of the Soviet history of philosophy, etc. These are Stan, the Slepikov brothers, Astrov, Maretsky, Stetsky, Karev, Lominadze, Pospelov, Mitin and others. The opposition calls them contemptuously and collectively "Stetsky-Maretsky". For several years they would set the tone in the press, but with the fall of Bukharin, their ruthless purge would follow, and in 1932 most of them would be expelled from the party, and in 1937-1938 they would be shot. By not taking the side of Zinoviev in the decisive struggle of 1925-1926, Bukharin is rewarded by

becoming the head of the Comintern instead of Zinoviev. For Stalin, this appointment is temporary. It is unpleasant for Stalin that a Russian member of the Politburo is at the head of the Comintern: formally, the Comintern is, after all, as if the highest authority of world communism and formally stands above Stalin. Soon Bukharin will be replaced by the obedient Molotov and, finally, by the Bulgarian Dimitrov.

To Bukharin's credit, it must be said that he does not accept Stalin's meat grinder - to go ahead to communism and, above all, to crush the peasantry. He could, like all the other Molotovs and Kaganoviches, blow into the tune of the new master. Moreover, in essence, he does not have sympathy for the Trotskyist-Zinoviev opposition, not seeing a big difference between their policy and Stalin's. And when

Stalin finally chooses his own path - the abolition of the NEP and the destruction of the countryside, Bukharin vigorously opposes it. Stalin removed him from power, and Bukharin went over to the opposition. But although Stalin's henchmen diligently glue him to Trotskyism, this amalgam is wholly invented, in essence Bukharin is alien both to the Trotskyist-Zinoviev bloc and, of course, to Stalinist policy. For many years, Stalin moderately persecuted him: he was expelled from the Central Committee only in February 1937. But Bukharin's turn is coming. And after the usual low Stalinist judicial comedy in March 1938, Bukharin descends into the Lubyanka basement. Reading the official

history of the CPSU in 1976 may be surprised: Stalin has long been thrown off his pedestal, Stalingrad has long become Volgograd. Why hasn't all the stupid and absurd Stalinist accusations against Bukharin, and, by the way, against many other prominent communists, been dropped as well? Moreover, a number of prominent party members underwent "rehabilitation", that is, it was publicly recognized that the charges brought against them by Stalin's lackeys were

false.

The key to understanding why one is "rehabilitated" while others are not is this. Once for all, the Party has

established the principle that it never errs, that it is always right. It never departs from this principle, and its entire official history rests on this principle. Let us take the case of a prominent and capable major figure in the Party, for example, Bukharin. Let us suppose that at important turning points in the history of the Party, he issued correct and sensible warnings. Party congresses, conferences and plenums of the Central Committee condemned his opinions. That is, in other words, a gathering of his servants who trembled before Stalin, at his behest, made decisions dictated by him. These decisions are the decisions of congresses and conferences. If it were pleasing to Stalin to dictate directly opposite decisions, the obedient crowd would "with enthusiasm" and "endless applause" vote for these opposite decisions. That is, in essence, the fact that these are decisions of congresses and conferences is pure fiction. Both party leaders and party historians know this very well. But among the various and many-sided types of lies on which the Communist Party is built and lives, this plays its own auxiliary role. Its task is to reaffirm the principle that the party is always right and never wrong. There is no need that it was not a party, but a bunch of cowardly and terrorized lackeys who raised their hands at Stalin's orders. For the observance of a false principle, this is the infallible decision of the party. But Bukharin's opinions were against it. This means "anathema", and forever Bukharin will remain an enemy in party history. Read it. They will keep explaining to you that Bukharin is wrong, he always made mistakes, he always spoke out against the Party, and so on. Of course, the Stalinist times are gone, when it took completely absurd forms, when all sorts of second-class Eisensteins, in order to please Stalin, cooked up "historical" films in which the brilliant and wise Stalin majestically strides through the pages of history, and the vile little traitor Bukharin runs after him and treacherously whispers to someone to the side: "You only need to bet on the fist; otherwise we perished..." and so on in the same vein. Now the style is different, but the "rehabilitation" of Bukharin, that is, the recognition that he was thickly covered with vile party lies, is still impossible.

For the same reasons, it is impossible to "rehabilitate" any prominent party member, against which, in Stalin's time, resolutions were adopted by party authorities.

On the contrary, let's take the case of Tukhachevsky, Blucher, Yegorov. These were the military, standing far from party life, playing no role in it and not interfering in it. Stalin considered it good to shoot them: they were declared to be some kind of German, Japanese or other spies, like Trotsky. But party congresses and conferences did not accuse them of any deviations. And when the time came to admit that Comrade Stalin had gone too far in the "cult of personality", nothing prevented Tukhachevsky and Blucher from being "rehabilitated". There was some kind of mistake (Stalin's, or Yezhov's, or some other), but the mistake of some person or body, but not the party. This means that it is possible to reconsider the matter, to admit that someone was mistaken (better if a small fry), but this does not in the least damage the basic principle that the party is always right.

That is why a number of party members who did not take a prominent part in the recognized oppositions can be rehabilitated, but it is absolutely impossible to rehabilitate others, like Trotsky or Zinoviev. And the creator of the Red Army or the first chairman of the Comintern will continue to be listed as foreign spies and enemies of communism.

(Maybe this will change, and one fine day it will be possible to speak and write the truth about them in the party: then you will have every reason to believe that this party is no longer communist). Let's say a few words

about the other two candidates for membership in Lenin's Politburo: Kalinin and Molotov. Actually, there is no need to talk

much about Kalinin. The figure is completely colorless, decorative "All-Russian headman", was introduced by Lenin into the Politburo in vain. Here he was tolerated and not considered at all. At official ceremonies, he performed his tinsel-peasant functions. He never had any claims to any

independence and always dutifully followed those who were in power. Just in case, in order to have compromising material about him, the GPU slipped him young ballerinas from the Bolshoi Theater, not without Comrade Kanner's approval of these operations. Due to inexperience, Mihalvanych was content with the very third grade. This compromise was also organized out of excessive official zeal, since in essence there was not the slightest need for it - Mikhavanych would never allow himself to make any speeches against those in power. Even later, when Stalin carried out a gigantic extermination of the village, Mikhavanych, who knew the village well, pretended that nothing special was happening, at most, did not get out of this good-natured old man's grumbling, to which the Politburo had long been accustomed to as something that had no values. In short, Mikhail Ivanovich was insignificant and cowardly, which is why he passed all the Stalinist times safely, died in his bed and was honored that the city of Koenigsberg began to be called Kaliningrad. In 1937, Stalin ordered the arrest of his wife, Mikhail Ivanovich did not blink an eye: those were difficult times.

I have had to speak about Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov more than once above. In the history of Stalin's ascent to the heights of power, he played a very important role. But he himself never claimed the role of the first violin. Meanwhile, he came very close to this role. In March 1921, he was elected executive secretary of the Central Committee and a candidate member of the Politburo. Within a year he would have the entire apparatus of the Central Committee in his hands. But in March 1922, Zinoviev, organizing his troika, will want to put Stalin on the apparatus of the Central Committee, making him general secretary and relegating Molotov to second place in the apparatus of the Central Committee - the second secretary of the Central Committee. Zinoviev's calculation: Trotsky must be thrown off, and Stalin is an obvious and cruel enemy of Trotsky. Zinoviev and Kamenev prefer Stalin. And Molotov not only submits, but also becomes a loyal lieutenant of Stalin, from under whom he never tries to get out; Later, he takes revenge on Zinoviev and Kamenev with pleasure, as well as on Trotsky, who for some reason disliked Molotov (however, not "for some reason": Trotsky lives in abstractions; from Molotov he created the embodiment of the "bureaucratic degeneration of the party").

Following this, Molotov always and constantly follows Stalin; he carries out all the most serious work on the selection of the people of the party apparatus - the secretaries of the regional and provincial committees - and the creation of a Stalinist majority in the Central Committee. He will be second secretary of the Central Committee for ten years. When Stalin needs him, he will be the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the STO; when necessary, will stand at the head of the Comintern; when necessary, will be Minister of Foreign Affairs.

It is remarkable that with him Stalin is doing the same trick as with many of his other lieutenants - the arrest of his wife, while the Stalinist entourage himself continues to be in his favor; we have already seen that this was done with both Kalinin and Poskrebyshev. Molotov's wife is Jewish. Under the party nickname Pearl, she, a prominent party member, is at the head of the perfume industry. Stalin arrests her and sends her into exile (and this exile is not at all like a royal one). Molotov, of course, endures this patiently. But this is not surprising. Remarkably different. When Stalin died and Molotov's wife returned from exile, both she and Molotov were solid Stalinists. Molotov disapproves of the de-Stalinization undertaken by Khrushchev. And he, and Kaganovich, and Malenkov are convinced Stalinists, and at the first opportunity (1957) they are trying to overthrow Khrushchev. What they fail and is worth the final loss of all posts and places in the party hierarchy with the final release into circulation.

Why does Molotov want the return of Stalinist methods? Nostalgia for the times when Genghis Khan's power was in the hands, when everyone was trembling and no one in the country dared to utter a word? Maybe a more realistic calculation. The communist system, in order to hold on, requires violence against the entire population, it requires a gigantic police apparatus, a system of terror. The stronger the terror, the stronger the power. In Stalin's times, the population was even afraid that some heretical thought would come to mind, and there could be no talk of any action against the authorities. And now Khrushchev is unscrewing the nut; people start thinking, talking, disagreeing. How far can it go? In Stalin's time, there were no such risks. Meanwhile, Molotov, perhaps, provides an amazing

example of what he makes of

human communism. I worked a lot with Molotov. This is a very conscientious, not brilliant, but extremely efficient bureaucrat. He is very calm and patient. To me he was always extremely benevolent and amiable, and in personal relations with me very nice. And with everyone who approaches him, he is correct, a completely acceptable person, no rudeness, no arrogance, no bloodthirstiness, no desire to humiliate or crush anyone. In ten years, Stalin himself will not only approve the lists of those arrested and shot.

For a kind of mutual responsibility, these lists will pass through the hands of Molotov and Kaganovich. Of course, Molotov signs them after Stalin. But here is a surname that catches his eye. He writes next to VMN. It means - the highest measure of punishment. This is enough - the person will be shot. What is this? Mimicry before Stalin? Or is it an intoxicating feeling of one's power - so I wrote down three letters - and there is no person. And how many thousands

of deaths in these lists were approved by a calm, unworried bureaucrat. And no regrets. On the contrary, Stalin is dead, it would be nice to bring back Stalin's times.

Is it possible to make everything out of a person? Give him into the hands of Stalin, elevate him in a system where man is a wolf to man, and he will indifferently watch how millions of people perish in cruel suffering. Place him as an ordinary official in a good human system of society, and he will work at night, seeking means of helping the peasants who have suffered from crop shortages in the village of Neelovka, Aleksinsky district. This problem will confront me many more times during my wanderings among the Bolshevik leadership. As for Molotov personally, I still have a special feeling. In the 1920s, I witnessed everything that happened in the Bolshevik

center. Half a century has passed, and if we raise the question of who else among the living people on the surface of the earth saw and knows all this, then there is only one answer to this question: Molotov (there is Kaganovich, but in those years he stood further from the center of events than Molotov). I'm only talking about the twenties. Then I was no longer in the Bolshevik center, and Molotov, on the contrary, continued to be at the center of events in the next three or four decades, and no one now knows better than he how these events proceeded. But about all this, he can neither write nor publish a single line that would be in disagreement with the official lie. That is, he cannot tell the truth about anything.

Chapter 12

FIRST TRIP ABROAD. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC BUREAU OF NARKOMFIN. KONDRATIEV. 1925 THE FIGHT OF STALIN AND ZINOVIEV. PREPARATION OF THE CONGRESS. CONGRESS-REVOLUTION. ANOTHER MEANING OF THE REVOLUTION.

In addition to working in the Central Committee, I also work in the Supreme Council of Physical Culture, and in the Narkomfin. In the High Council, it's more fun than work. I participate in meetings of the Presidium and lead two sections: in the summer - the athletics section, in the winter - the winter sports section (skating and skiing). At the Presidium, work is going on easily and amicably. Chairman of the Council Semashko (aka People's Commissar of Health) is an intelligent, cultured person, and it is not difficult to work with him. In addition, he understands well that it is necessary to adhere to the line of the Central Committee, and I am doing this line. Krylenko, the former Commander-in-Chief, then the bloodthirsty Prosecutor of the Republic, now the People's Commissar of Justice, comes to the meetings of the Presidium. He is a passionate chess player, and we put him in charge of the chess and checkers section. According to her, he comes. While other questions are being discussed and he has nothing to do, I take a sheet of paper, write: 1. e2-e4 and push the sheet to him. Now a game of chess begins between us, without looking at the board. But after seven or eight moves, he, without looking at the board, can no longer play, takes out tiny road chess from his briefcase and deepens into the game. Semashko looks at us reproachfully, but it is almost impossible to tear Krylenko out of the game he has started.

When it turns out that he is losing, he is very worried about it. The winter sports section gives me a reason f

skates and skis are bad. It was decided to buy a batch of skates and skis in Norway. The Council asks me to go to Norway for a very short time, see the material on the spot and choose what to buy. In December 1924 I make a short journey which makes a strong impression on me. I am abroad for the first time, and I see a normal, human life, which is completely different from the Soviet one. In addition, these three Scandinavian countries through which I pass - Finland, Sweden and Norway, breathe something unknown in the Soviets. These are countries of amazing honesty and truthfulness. I don't get used to it right away. In Norway, I want to explore the surroundings of the capital. Above Oslo rises Mount Holmenkollen, widely used for winter sports and for walking. I climb it with an employee of the embassy, who is assigned to me as a guide. Pretty warm - only two degrees of frost, and soon we warm up from the rise (we are warmly dressed) and we get hot. An embassy employee takes off a warm knitted jacket, puts it on a stone by the road, writes something on a piece of paper, puts a piece of paper on his jacket and fixes it with a stone. I'm wondering, "What are you doing?" "Very hot," my companion says. I left my jacket. When we go down, I'll take it." "Well," I say, "your jacket was crying, say goodbye to it." "But no," the embassy official says, I left a note: the jacket is not lost; Please do not touch." I look at it as a strange farce. The road is busy and there are a lot of people. We go down in two hours - the jacket is in place. The employee explains to me that nothing is ever lost here. If a theft occurs in the city, it eventually turns out that the culprit is a sailor from a foreign steamer. In Finland, in the villages, there are no locks or locks on the doors - what theft is is not known here.

In Sweden, at the embassy, I talk with the embassy adviser Asmus and his wife Koroleva. She and her seven-year-old son had just arrived from Russia. Sunday. A working demonstration of protest against something is passing by the embassy building. Well-dressed people in clean suits and hats walk sedately, sedately and calmly. A seven-year-old son looks out the window at this procession for a long time and finally asks his mother: "Mom, where are all these bourgeois going?" On the way back, I pass the Soviet border near Beloostrov - 30 kilometers to

Leningrad. The conductor reminds: "Citizens, you are already in Soviet Russia - look after your luggage." I look out the window at the landscape. One glove is on my hand, the other I put on the seat. A minute later I look and find that this other glove has already been stolen.

I am returning to my usual sub-Soviet life. In the People's Commissariat of Finance, a constant large item of expenditure is the purchase of new light bulbs. The population has an acute shortage of electric light bulbs, and the People's Commissariat employees unscrew them and take them home. People's Commissar Sokolnikov finds an ingenious solution: the factory supplying light bulbs is ordered to engrave on each light bulb: "stolen from Narkomfin." Thefts immediately stop, the one who takes the light bulb to himself signs his theft.

I return from the Scandinavian countries with a strange impression, as if I had put my head out the window and take a breath of fresh air.

Unlike the Supreme Council, my work in the Narkomfin is serious and I am fine
addictive.

Before the revolution, there was an Academic Committee under the Ministry of Finance, which grouped the best financial specialists, in the majority of professors. The People's Commissar for Finance Sokolnikov creates a financial and economic bureau under the People's Commissariat of Finance, which performs the functions of the Scientific Committee. It is divided into the Institute for Economic Research and the Market Institute. Sokolnikov invites the best specialists to join them, most of them old consultants from the pre-war Ministry of Finance. There are no Marxists or Communists among them. Sokolnikov puts them in good conditions, their opinions are highly valued, and listening to their advice, a difficult and complex monetary reform is brilliantly carried out, a solid golden ruble is created and finances are streamlined. Professor Mechislav Genrikhovich Bronsky, a member of the Collegium of the Narkomfin, oversees the activities of this Bureau. However, when I ask Sokolnikov whether Professor Bronsky really answers with a smile: "Everyone can be considered a professor, since the opposite has not been proven." The real name of Bronsky is Varshavsky. He is Polish

a Jew, very cultured and well-read, an old emigrant (he was with Lenin), who was engaged in journalism. He has very little Bolshevik spirit. There are no administrative talents either. He does not supervise the Financial and Economic Bureau in any way. His main occupation, and it is the only one that interests him, is the publication of the thickest monthly magazine Socialist Economy. According to Bronsky, it should be the best economic journal in Soviet Russia. So it probably is. In addition, Bronsky edits the daily Financial Newspaper. But the Financial and Economic Bureau is left to its own devices, and so far there seems to be no damage from this. Sokolnikov offers me to lead him. He, among other things, has in mind my knowledge of the Politburo on all questions of the economy and hopes that I will be able to make the work of the Bureau closer to current financial and economic practice; indeed, being far from the bodies of practical decisions, the professors of the Bureau are more inclined to abstract theoretical work than to practical work. Actually, I come to this job already as an anti-communist. All professors are, in essence, also anti-communists. But they consider me a trusted communist of the

regime and look at me as an enemy. The funny thing is that they harbor the illusion that it is possible to work with the communist regime and do useful work for the country. I am much more

more knowledgeable than them.

In any case, they perceive the appointment of a very young communist as their boss as a grave threat to their free and independent life. The director of the Institute for Economic Research, Shmelev, comes on their behalf to Sokolnikov and says that the professors are going to leave Narkomfin, not seeing the opportunity to work in the environment that the new boss will create, a young communist who, due to his age, cannot have any authority for them either. Sokolnikov smiles and says: "Let's resume this conversation in a month. You are completely mistaken about your new bosses."

Within the first two weeks, everything changes. The old and experienced main professors, who were still consultants to the tsarist Ministry of Finance - Genzel, Sokolov, Shmelev - are surprised to discover at the meetings of the Institute that I not only have an excellent understanding of all financial and economic problems, but I have a huge advantage over them - I know what is real, what is suitable for government policy, where and how practical work should be directed (I know all this from my work in the Politburo). At meetings of the Market Institute, I also give the necessary instructions that direct the work of the institute in the right direction; but also in their specific industry, in which they consider themselves unsurpassed specialists, I am essentially on an equal footing with them - at the very first meeting, I propose to introduce the index of horse-drawn transport into the number of market indices for predicting the evolution of the market, which immediately turns out to be one of most valuable for predicting the evolution of the food market. In addition, I quickly develop excellent relationships with them. The cell and petty communists have already tried to gnaw at them, showing party vigilance in relation to all these "suspicious specialists." I pull up the cell - in my work in the Central Committee I am an authority for it - and force it to leave the professors alone.

Two weeks later, Shmelev comes to Sokolnikov and declares that the professors take everything their statements about the new boss back and that working with him was excellent.

She will walk exemplary all the time. I also have excellent relations with Bronsky - he is a nice person, there is almost nothing Bolshevik in him. By the way, it occupies part of the large apartment in which Veniamin Sverdlov and his wife, whom I visit, live.

Perhaps the most likeable of my new subordinates is the director of the Market Institute, Professor Nikolai Dmitrievich Kondratyev. He is a great scientist, a man of deep mind. He created the market institute, and in the new market business in Russia, with his observations and control over the evolution of the economy, he renders major services to the leading economic bodies, and above all to the Narkomfin. Of course, his work is based on the same naive illusion that it is possible to work with the Bolshevik government: they are not entirely fools and should understand that knowledgeable people and specialists are needed and useful. Like other major specialist consultants of Narkomfin,

he believes in the benefit of his work and does not understand the wolf essence of communism. He also works in the agricultural section of the State Planning Commission.

He soon has to find out with what power he is dealing. In the State Planning Committee, striving for a reasonable agricultural policy, he proceeds in his advice from the fact that the country needs an increase in peasant production, and for this it is necessary not to pull the peasantry with the incessant incitement of rural lazy people and parasites against working and economic peasants, which is the essence of the Bolshevik "class struggle in the countryside, but to give them the opportunity to work quietly. But in the State Planning Commission, a communist cell is on the alert and grabs

the specialists by the legs. There is no Bazhanov, who could click on her. And the communists raise a wild howl - Kondratiev recommends abandoning the Bolshevik struggle in the countryside, the "Kondratievites" demand a bet on the kulak, "Kondratievshchina" - that's what the counter-revolution in the countryside looks like today. Noise is raised, articles are published in Pravda, a campaign is announced against the "Kondratievshchina". Some petty communist riffraff is trying their best to make a career on their vigilance - they have discovered and exposed the hidden class enemy. Finish him off! Of course, poor Kondratiev is not able to answer a single line to all this persecution that is being carried out on the pages of the press - Pravda does not recognize the right to vote for him. He is very depressed. The Narkomfin cell is also trying to cling to him - after all, the signal was given by Pravda.

I do not allow them to arrange persecution in the Narkomfin. I explain to the cell that we are talking about agriculture and the agricultural section of the State Planning Commission, where this whole story comes from. Here, at the Narkomfin, Kondratiev works in a completely different area - according to the conjuncture, which has nothing to do with his political attitudes about the countryside, here his work is impeccable and useful, and here he must be left alone. While I am in the Narkomfin, they really do not dare to touch him here. But his persecution is already taking place on an all-Russian scale, and after the start of collectivization, the moment finally passes when Stalinist collectivization, destroying agriculture, leads to a lack of food and famine. Then, according to the established communist practice, it is necessary to open the enemies on whom to shift the blame.

In 1930 the GPU will "discover" a "working peasant party", a completely absurd Chekist invention. This party is led by Professor Kondratiev, together with Professor Chayanov and Yurovsky (Yurovsky, by the way, is a Jew, an economist, a specialist in currency and money circulation, he never had anything to do with any peasants or any village). The GPU is blowing the censer wide: the "party" has either one hundred thousand members, or two hundred thousand. A high-profile trial is being prepared that will explain to the country why there is no bread - this is sabotage by the Kondratievs; and poor Kondratiev would, of course, have to confess to all his crimes at the trial. But at the last moment, Stalin decided that all this did not look convincing enough, the process was canceled and ordered the GPU to condemn the leaders and members of the "working peasant party" "in a closed order", that is, according to the verdict of some KGB troika, they were sent to die in the Soviet extermination penal servitude - concentration camps. Thus, a great scientist and a wonderful person, Professor Kondratiev, died. He died, of course, primarily a victim of the illusion that one could cooperate with the Soviet government and the communists, believing that this would bring some benefit to the country. Alas, this is deeply misleading. The authorities use such carriers of illusions as long as it is to their advantage, and rudely destroy them when the right moment comes and it is necessary to blame someone for the senseless and ridiculous destructive Marxist practice.

1925 was the year of the struggle for power between Zinoviev and Stalin. The troika, temporarily restored to complete the struggle against Trotsky, finally broke up in March. In April, at meetings of the Politburo, Zinoviev and Kamenev vigorously attacked Stalin's "theory of building socialism in one country." The trio didn't meet again. Stalin approved the draft agenda of the Politburo itself. For several months the Politburo functioned as a collegiate body apparently under the leadership of Zinoviev and Kamenev. This appearance was determined in particular by the fact that Stalin, as always (out of ignorance), took little part in the discussion of various issues. Kamenev, as before, directed the entire economy of the country, and economic questions always occupied a large place in the work of the Politburo. Trotsky pretended to take part in the current work correctly. And the Politburo reigned thin

world.

Not being quite sure that the majority of the members of the Central Committee would follow him, Stalin did not look for a final battle at the Plenum of the Central Committee and waited for the final decision from the next congress, carried on his hidden preparatory work and not only did not force anything, but, on the contrary, in every possible way delayed the date of the congress. In the summer, as always, there was some political lull. But in the fall, Trotsky published the pamphlet *Toward Socialism or Capitalism?*, resuming the political struggle against the majority of the Central Committee, which, in turn, began to divide. Trying to maintain his position as a political leader, Zinoviev immediately responded with the pamphlet *Leninism*, in which he carried out his theory of the philosophy of equality. At the very beginning of October, the Politburo decided on the date of the congress and who would make a political report to the Central Committee at the congress. It was decided to convene the congress for mid-December, and at the suggestion of Molotov, the majority of the Politburo voted in favor of entrusting the political report of the Central Committee at the congress to Stalin. The majority in the Politburo was lost for Zinoviev and Kamenev. They immediately submitted an application to the Politburo demanding that the discussion be opened. At the plenum of the Central Committee that opened immediately after this, it turned out that all of Stalin's preparatory work had borne fruit - the plenum confirmed that Stalin was entrusted with making a political report at the congress, and refused to open a discussion, which Zinoviev considered his main chance. The plenum, in addition, pretended that it was now attaching the main importance to "the work of the Party among the rural poor" and, in order to open in advance the preparation of a campaign against the Zinoviev-Kamenev group, condemned both the right deviation, "kulak", and the left, "anti-middle peasants". On the basis of this resolution, the party apparatus began to vigorously gnaw at the "new opposition." Of course, as always before a congress, the Central Committee had to announce the theses for the congress and open discussion on them. Stalin and Molotov completely smeared this whole discussion (Stalin was afraid of political discussion) and replaced it with a simple "elaboration" of the resolutions of the October plenum, on the basis of which the elections to the congress were to take place. Only on December 15, the pre-Congress plenum of the Central Committee approved the theses for the congress, and on December 18 the congress opened. But, of course, in December there were polemics in organizations and at party conferences. The election of delegates to the congress, which took place in early December at regional and provincial party conferences, predetermined both the composition of the congress and the defeat of Zinoviev. Not being able to control the entire local party apparatus (which only Stalin and Molotov could do while sitting in the Central Committee), Zinoviev and Kamenev counted on the support of three main and leading organizations - two metropolitan, Moscow and Leningrad, and the most important of the provincial ones - Ukrainian. Kaganovich, sent by the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, did everything necessary to ensure that the Ukrainian organization was lost for Zinoviev and Kamenev. On the contrary, Zinoviev continued to hold the Leningrad organization in his hands. Although Stalin achieved the removal of the secretary of the Leningrad Committee, Zalutsky, who spoke out too early and sharply against Stalin and Molotov and their majority, accusing them of a "Thermidorian degeneration," Evdokimov, secretary of the Northwestern Bureau of the Central Committee, was Zinoviev's right hand, and led the Leningrad organization for him. But completely unexpected and catastrophic for Zinoviev and Kamenev was the transition to the side of Stalin's main organization - the Moscow. At the heart of this transition was Uglanov's treachery, cunningly prepared in advance by Stalin.

I have already told how at the end of 1923, when the right-wing opposition broke out, the Politburo was dissatisfied with Zelensky, the secretary of the Moscow Party Committee. In the summer of 1924, the troika, still acting in agreement, transferred him to the first secretary of the Central Asian Bureau of the Central Committee. All members of the troika agreed that he was too weak for Moscow. But who should be imprisoned in Moscow, the most important organization of the Party? Kamenev, as always little interested in these organizational questions, gave the initiative to Zinoviev. Stalin would have preferred Kaganovich to be placed in the Moscow organization, but Zinoviev, who at that time was number one and set the tone, wanted his trusted person to be the first secretary of the MK. He proposed Uglanov to this post. The conversation about this went on at the troika, where I was present, as always, the fourth. Uglanov worked in 1922 in Leningrad with Zinoviev, he was a loyal man, and when the question arose about the first secretary of the Nizhny Novgorod provincial committee, Zinoviev insisted that

for Uglanov to be nominated there. This was the first time the troika, Stalin did not always raise his voice and had to agree to this appointment. But after that, Molotov took up the processing of Uglanov, and in the summer of 1924, somehow I came to Stalin and did not find him in his office, I decided that he was in the next, intermediate office (conference room between the office of Stalin and Molotov). I open the door and go in. I see Stalin, Molotov and Uglanov. Uglanov, seeing me, turned pale, and he looked extremely frightened. Stalin reassured him: "This is comrade Bazhanov, the secretary of the Politburo - do not be afraid, there are no secrets from him, he is aware of all affairs." Uglanov calmed down with difficulty.

I immediately realized what it was. The day before, at a meeting of the troika, Zinoviev suggested that Uglanov be appointed head of the Moscow organization. Stalin objected: is Uglanov strong enough to lead the most important metropolitan organization? Zinoviev insisted, Stalin pretended that he was against it, and agreed against his will and with great reluctance. In fact, Uglanov had been subjected to Molotov's pre-treatment, and now a secret pact was being concluded between Stalin and Uglanov against Zinoviev.

In compliance with this pact, Uglanov played a double game for almost a year and a half, assuring Zinoviev and Kamenev of his loyalty, and in the second half of 1925, of his hostility to Stalin. In fact, he prepared and selected the appropriate personnel, and at the Moscow Pre-Congress Party Conference on December 5, 1925, he suddenly, with all his luggage and with all the party elite in Moscow, went over to Stalin's side. This was the final blow, and Zinoviev's defeat was a foregone conclusion.

How events unfolded at this congress (XIV), which took place until the end of December, is known. Stalin read the political report, dull and dull. The Leningrad delegation demanded Zinoviev's co-report, which was provided to him. The report didn't change anything. The entire congress obediently voted for Stalin, and one Leningrad delegation voted for Zinoviev. Kamenev's report "On the Current Questions of Economic Construction" was removed from the congress agenda. In addition to Zinoviev, Kamenev, Sokolnikov, Evdokimov, Lashevich spoke out for the opposition (Evdokimov would be shot in 1936, Lashevich would commit suicide in 1928). But even from the Leningrad delegation, many hurried to "change milestones" and turned

after the victor's chariot: both Shvernik, secretary of the Leningrad Committee, and Moskvina, deputy secretary of the North-Western Bureau of the Central Committee, and Komarov, chairman of the Leningrad provincial Executive Committee of Soviets.

Trotsky was silent at the congress and watched with malice as his main enemy, Zinoviev, fell to the ground. Four months later, in April 1926, Zinoviev and Kamenev were elected members of the Central Committee. Of course, all sorts of organizational conclusions are nevertheless made at the first post-Congress plenum of the Central Committee in January 1926: Kamenev is removed from the leadership of the Soviet economy; he was removed from the post of chairman of the Council of Labor and Defense, and from the post of deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. And he was transferred from Politburo members to Politburo candidates. Rykov is appointed chairman of the CTO. The composition of the Politburo is expanding: Molotov and Kalinin move from candidates to membership, and Voroshilov immediately becomes a member of the Politburo. Zinoviev and Trotsky remain members of the Politburo. The candidates of the Politburo, in addition to Kamenev and Dzerzhinsky, who had been a candidate before, are Rudzutak, Uglanov (as a reward for the operation) and Petrovsky (the formal head of Soviet power in Ukraine). Stalin was re-elected general secretary, Molotov second, Uglanov third, Stanislav Kossior fourth. Stalin puts Kirov in Leningrad, who was previously the secretary of the Azerbaijan Central Committee. The

following year, 1926, is filled with the gradual chewing of the "new opposition". It is clear to the whole world that there has been a change of leadership in communist Russia and in world communism. But few people see and understand that a real coup d'état has taken place, and new circles and layers have come to the leadership of Russia and communism. It requires

explanations.

In Russia, before the revolution, the Jews, who were limited in their rights, were mostly in opposition, and the Jewish youth supplied cadres in large numbers for revolutionary parties and organizations. And Jews have always played a big role in the leadership of these parties.

The Bolshevik Party was no exception to this rule, and in the Bolshevik Central Committee about half of the members were Jews.

After the revolution, it quickly turned out that it was in the hands of this group of Jews that all the main positions of power in the Central Committee were concentrated. This was probably due to the centuries-old habit of the Jewish diaspora to stick together and support each other, while the Russian Central Committee members did not have such habits. In any case, all the most important central positions of power were occupied by a few Jews: Trotsky - the head of the Red Army and the second political leader (after Lenin); Sverdlov - formally head of the Soviet government and who until his death was Lenin's right hand and main assistant; Zinoviev - who became the head of the Comintern and was the almost omnipotent governor of the second capital, St. Petersburg; Kamenev - Lenin's first deputy for the Council of People's Commissars, the de facto head of the Soviet economy, and in addition, the governor of the first capital, Moscow. Thus, the Jews, making up about half of the composition of the Central Committee, had much more influence and power in it than non-Jews.

This position lasted from 1917 until the end of 1925. At the XIV Congress at the end of 1925, Stalin not only removed the Jewish leaders of the party from the central government, but also took the main step in the complete removal of the Jewish part of the top of the party from the central government. But Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev, removed from the main leadership, still entered the Central Committee at this congress. At the next congress (in 1927), they were already expelled from the party, and the Jews elected to the Central Committee were already isolated exceptions. Never later did the Jewish part of the elite return to leadership, and individual Jews in the Central Committee became (the same) isolated exceptions. It was, however, the same Kaganovich and the same Mekhlis, who openly advertised that they did not consider themselves Jews. In the following (thirties) years, Stalin sometimes introduced some of the most obedient and faithfully fulfilling his will Jews, like Yagoda, as candidates for the Central Committee, but after that he shot these innovations as well. And in recent decades, no Jew has joined the Central Committee of the Party, and with the death of Mekhlis (1953) and the removal of a single Jew from the Central Committee of Kaganovich (1957), there is, it seems, now there is one candidate Dymshits for 400 members and candidates of the Central Committee).

In essence, Stalin carried out a coup, forever removing from the leadership the formerly dominant Jewish group.

But this was done carefully and did not have the appearance that the blow was being struck specifically at the Jews. Firstly, it did not look like a Russian national reaction, if only because power was passing into the hands of a Georgian; secondly, it was always deliberately emphasized that the struggle was going on with the opposition and that it was only a matter of ideological differences: Zinoviev, Kamenev and their like-minded people were eliminated, allegedly, because they looked differently at the possibilities

of building socialism in one country. This view was not only well observed, but later it seemed to be confirmed by two characteristic features: on the one hand, having removed the Jews from the Central Committee, Stalin did not continue this purge from top to bottom, but stopped it, and in the next few years the Jews still occupied less important posts - deputy commissars, members of the boards of people's commissariats, members of the Central Control Commission; on the other side. when the mass execution of leading cadres of the party began in the mid-1930s, both Jews and non-Jews were shot in sufficient

And observing all this, it could be assumed that in the course of the usual struggle for power Stalin got rid of his competitors, and the fact that they were Jews was a matter of chance. I cannot accept this point of view. For two reasons.

First, because Stalin was an anti-Semite. When it was necessary to hide it, Stalin carefully concealed it, and it broke through only occasionally, as, for example, in the case with Faivilovich, about which I spoke above. From 1931-1932, to hide this, Stalin had serious political considerations - an open anti-Semite Hitler came to power in Germany, and, foreseeing the possibility of a clash with him, Stalin did not want to arouse the hostility of the Jewish world. This game proved to be very useful both before and after the war. Only by 1948-50 there

was no longer any need for it, and Stalin gave the party an almost open anti-Semitic line, and in 1952-53 he considered a plan for the complete extermination of the Jews in Russia, and only his

unexpected death saved Russian Jews from extermination. His anti-Semitism, however, is also confirmed by Svetlana (remember, for example, how he drove a Jew who courted her to hard labor, and completely lost interest in her when she married another Jew). The story of the Jewish "white coat conspiracy" is also well known. Secondly, because watching

the preparations for the revolution of the XIV Congress, I was in a special position - I could see that Stalin's hidden work was proceeding along a special, completely specific line. It must be said that since 1917 the

composition of the party has changed a lot and has continued to change without interruption. If in 1917 the Jews were a relatively large group in the party, this group reflected the social composition of the Jews themselves - they were artisans, merchants, intellectuals, but there were almost no workers among them, and there were no peasants at all. Since 1917, a great quantitative growth of the party began, which widely attracted first of all the workers, and then the peasants. The further, the more the Jewish part of the party drowned in this mass. Meanwhile, she continued to maintain leadership positions, creating the appearance of some kind of narrow privileged layer. On this occasion, discontent grew in the party, and Stalin began to skillfully play on this discontent. When the Jewish group was divided into the Trotsky group and the Zinoviev group, which were at war with each other, Stalin turned out to be a convenient camouflage: he selected for the necessary posts in the party apparatus those who were dissatisfied, "wiped out" by the leading Jewish group, but officially this is camouflaged by the selection of obvious anti-Trotskyists (and there are few anti-Semites at all). I carefully observed whom Stalin and Molotov selected in these years to be the secretaries of the provincial and regional committees; all these were tomorrow's members of the Central Committee, and perhaps tomorrow's Politburo. They were all eager to overthrow the Jewish leadership and take its place. The necessary phraseology was quickly developed: from the Stalinist center, a line was given through the party apparatus - real party members are those who are from workers and peasants, the party should work; in order to join the party and advance in it, social origin must play an increasingly important role; this was also reflected in the charter; it is clear that the Jewish leaders, who came from intellectuals, merchants and artisans, were already regarded as something of a traveling companion. Training and preparation took place on the persecution of the "Trotskyist clan". But by the end of 1925, the necessary personnel were already in place in order to strike at the second group of the Jewish elite - the group of Zinoviev and Kamenev.

All prominent workers of the party apparatus who helped Stalin in this blow, with gladly took the vacant seats.

The coup was successful, and camouflage continued until 1947-1948. It was only during these years that the cards began to be revealed, at first cautiously, with a campaign against the "Zionists", then "cosmopolitans" and, finally, the introduction of a label in the passport about nationality: "Jewish", in order to finally put the Jews in a special position of internal enemies.

It is very characteristic that the world Jewish diaspora did not understand Stalin's anti-Jewish line until the war itself. The careless anti-Semite Hitler hacked away, the cautious anti-Semite Stalin hid everything. And until the White Coat Conspiracy itself, Jewish public opinion simply did not believe that the communist government could be anti-Semitic. Yes, and with this "conspiracy" everything was personally attributed to Stalin. And it took many more years to finally understand this meaning of the policy of Stalin's successors, who saw no reason to change the Stalinist line.

Radek composed a good part of Soviet and anti-Soviet jokes. I had the privilege of hearing them from him personally, first hand, so to speak. Radek's anecdotes responded vividly to the political topic of the day. Here are two typical Radekovsky anecdotes on the question of the participation of Jews in the leadership.

First anecdote: two Jews in Moscow read newspapers. One of them says to the other: "Abram Osipovich, some Bryukhanov has been appointed People's Commissar of Finance. What is his real name?" Abram Osipovich replies: "So this is his real name - Bryukhanov." "How! exclaims the first. Is the real name Bryukhanov? So is he Russian? - "Well, yes, Russian." "Oh, listen," the first one says, "these Russians are an amazing nation: they will crawl everywhere."

And when Stalin removed Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Politburo, Radek asked me at the meeting: "Comrade Bazhanov, what is the difference between Stalin and Moses? Do not know. Large: Moses led the Jews out of Egypt, and Stalin from the Politburo." It looks paradoxical, but in addition to the old types of anti-Semitism (religious and racist), a new one has been added - Marxist anti-Semitism. You can predict a great future for him.

CHAPTER 13. GPU. The essence of power

GPU. DZERZHINSKY. BOARD OF THE GPU. BERRY, VANDA ZVEDRE. ANNA GEORGIEVNA. WHAT SHOULD I DO? EVOLUTION OF POWER. ITS ESSENCE

GPU... How much this word merged for the Russian heart... In the year when I joined the Communist Party (1919), Bolsheviks were in power in my hometown. In April, on Easter Day, an issue of a communist daily newspaper came out with the broad headline "Christ is risen." The editor of the newspaper was the communist Sonin. His real name was Krymerman, he was a local Jew, young and good-natured. I really liked this example of religious tolerance and even benevolence, and I wrote it down as an asset for the communists. When the Chekists arrived in the city a few months later and began executions, I was outraged, and for me the division of communists into benevolent, "ideological" ones who wanted to build some kind of human society, and others who represented anger, hatred and cruelty, murderers and sadists that it's not about people,

but in the system.

During my subsequent stay in Ukraine, I learned many facts about the brutal bloody terror carried out by the Chekists. I arrived in Moscow with extremely hostile feelings towards this department. But I practically did not have to deal with him before my work in the Orgburo and the Politburo. Here I first of all met with members of the Central Control Commission Latsis and Peters, who at the same time were members of the collegium of the GPU. These were the very famous Latsis and Peters, on whose conscience there were brutal mass executions in Ukraine and other places of the civil war - the number of their victims numbered in the hundreds of thousands. I expected to meet frenetic, grim fanatic killers. To my great surprise, these two Latvians were the most common scum, ingratiating and obsequious little scoundrels, trying to forestall the desires of the party authorities. I was afraid that when I met these executioners, I would not be able to accept their fanaticism. But there was no fanaticism. They were execution officials, very busy with their personal careers and personal well-being, vigilantly watching the waving of the finger from Stalin's secretariat. My hostility to the department turned into disgust for its leadership.

But things were not so simple with the chairman of the GPU, Felix Edmundovich Dzerzhinsky. The old Polish revolutionary, who became the head of the Cheka from its very inception, he continued to formally head it until his death, although he practically took little part in its work, becoming after the death of Lenin the chairman of the Supreme Council of the National Economy (instead of Rykov, who became chairman of the Council of People's Commissars). At the very first meeting of the Politburo, where I saw him, he disorientated me both with his appearance and manner of speaking. He had the appearance of a Don Quixote, a manner of speaking - a man of conviction and ideas. I was struck by his old tunic with patched elbows. It was quite clear that this man did not use his position to seek any worldly benefits for himself personally. At first, I was struck by his vehemence in his speeches - the impression was that he takes the issue of party and state life very close to his heart and is keenly worried. This vehemence contrasted with some of the cold cynicism of the members of the Politburo. But in the future, I still had to somewhat change my opinion about Dzerzhinsky. At that time there was freedom within the party which was not in the country; each party member had the opportunity to defend and defend his point of view. Just as freely there was a discussion of any problems at the Politburo. Not to mention oppositionists such as

Trotsky and Pyatakov, who did not hesitate to sharply oppose their point of view to the opinion of the majority - among themselves, the majority, the discussion of any matter of principle or business took place in disputes. How many times Sokolnikov, who carried out the monetary reform, rebelled against various decisions of the Politburo on issues of the national economy, saying: "You are frustrating the monetary reform for me; if you make this decision, release me from the duties of the People's Commissar of Finance. And on matters of foreign policy and foreign trade, Krasin, who was the People's Commissar for Foreign Trade, directly accused the Politburo of its members that they did not understand anything about the issues being treated and read something like lectures.

But what caught my eye very soon was that Dzerzhinsky always followed the holders of power, and if he defended something with ardor, then only what was accepted by the majority. At the same time, his ardor was accepted by the members of the Politburo as something done and therefore indecent. During his heated speeches, the members of the Politburo looked to the side, at the papers, and an impression of awkwardness reigned. And once the presiding officer Kamenev said dryly: "Felix, you're not here at a rally, but at a meeting of the Politburo." And, oh miracle! Instead of justifying his ardor ("I take, they say, the affairs of the party and the revolution very close to my heart"), Felix suddenly switched from a hot, excited tone to the most simple, prosaic and calm one in one second. And at a meeting of the troika, when the conversation turned to Dzerzhinsky, Zinoviev said: "Of course, he has angina pectoris; but he really abuses it for effect. It must be added that when Stalin carried out his coup, Dzerzhinsky defended Stalin's positions with such vehemence as he supported the positions of Zinoviev and Kamenev yesterday (when they were in power).

In general, my impression was this: Dzerzhinsky never deviates one iota from the line adopted by the majority (and meanwhile, one could sometimes have a personal opinion); this is advantageous, and when he hotly and breathlessly defends this orthodox line, isn't Zinoviev right that he uses the external effects of his angina pectoris?

This impression was rather unpleasant for me. It was 1923, I was still a communist, and for me, someone, and even the person who was at the head of the GPU, needed an aura of sincerity and decency. In any case, there was no doubt that in the sense of using worldly blessings, it was impossible to make reproaches to him - in this sense, he was a completely decent person. This is probably partly why the Politburo kept him formally at the head of the GPU, so that he would not allow the subordinates of his department to diverge especially: the GPU, which had the right of life and death over the entire non-party sub-Soviet population, had as many temptations as you like. I don't think that Dzerzhinsky really fulfilled this role: he was quite far from the practice of his huge department, and the Politburo was content here rather with a fiction of the desired than with what actually happened.

Dzerzhinsky's first deputy (also a Pole), Menzhinsky, a man with a strange disease of the spinal cord, an aesthete who spent his life lying on a couch, in essence also supervised the work of the GPU very little. It so happened that the second deputy chairman of the GPU, Yagoda, was actually the head of the department. However, from frank conversations at

meetings of the troika, I quickly found out the position of the party leaders. By keeping the entire population in the hands of its practice of terror, the GPU could appropriate too much power altogether. Consciously, the troika kept Dzerzhinsky and Menzhinsky at the head of the GPU as formal leaders, in essence far from the practice of the GPU, and instructed Yagoda, a subject of little respect, who had no weight in the party and was aware of his complete subordination to the party apparatus, to conduct all the affairs of the GPU. It was necessary that the GPU should always and in everything be subordinate to the party and that no claims to power should be made.

had.

This idea of the leaders of the party was carried out without difficulty. The GPU did not come out of subordination to the apparatus. But preoccupied only with the relations between the GPU and the Party, the leaders treated the non-Party population with complete indifference and, in fact, handed over their entire huge mass to the complete arbitrariness of the GPU. Leaders were interested in power; they were busy fighting for power within the party. Outside the party, a GPU barrier was set up against the population, which was quite real and forbade the population of any kind of political life; therefore, eliminating the slightest threat to the power of the party. Party leadership

could sleep peacefully, and he was very little interested in the fact that the population was more and more seized in the iron pincers of the gigantic apparatus of the political police, to which the communist dictatorial system provides unlimited opportunities.

The first time I saw and heard Yagoda was at a meeting of the commission of the Central Committee, at which I was secretary, and Yagoda was among those called to the meeting. All members of the commission were not yet assembled, and those who arrived were talking among themselves. Yagoda was talking to Bubnov, who at that time was still the head of the Agitprop of the Central Committee. Yagoda boasted of his success in developing the information network of the GPU, which covered more and more the whole country. Bubnov replied that the main base of this network is all members of the party, who normally should always be and are informers of the GPU; As for the non-Party people, you, the GPU, of course choose the elements closest to and most devoted to the Soviet regime. "Not at all," Yagoda objected, we can turn anyone into a sexot, and in particular people who are completely hostile to the Soviet regime. - "How?" Bubnov inquired. "Very simple," Yagoda explained. Who wants to starve to death? If the GPU takes a person into circulation with the intention of turning him into his informant, no matter how much he resists, he will still be in our hands in the end: we will fire him from his job, and they will not be hired anywhere else without the secret consent of our bodies. And especially if a person has a family, a wife, children, he is forced to capitulate quickly. Yagoda made a disgusting impression on me. The old Chekist Ksenofontov, who used to be a member of the board of the Cheka, and now worked as the Executive Director of the Central Committee and carried out all the dark assignments of Kanner, Latsis and Peters, the arrogant and cheeky secretary of the board of the GPU Grisha Belenky completed the picture - the board of the GPU was a gang of dark scoundrels, covered for appearance by Dzerzhinsky.

Just at that time, my acquaintance, the assistant chief of the railway station in Podolia, came to Moscow to see me. He was an excellent, eminently decent man. He was married to my second cousin, knew me as a high school student and continued to say "you" to me, despite all my high ranks and ranks (I continued to say "you" to him). He was very depressed and came to ask me for advice and help. Local organs of the GPU on the railway demanded that he join the ranks of secret employees, that is, that he spies and informs on his colleagues. He was probably marked as easy prey - he was burdened with a family and was a very gentle person. But he refused to be a secretary of the GPU. The local Chekist opened his cards - we will throw you out of service, say "ay" to the railway and in general you will not be accepted anywhere; when the family begins to swell from hunger, you will agree anyway.

He came to me: what to do? Fortunately for him, he had protection in my face - a high-ranking apparatchik. I took a printed form of the Central Committee and wrote on it a note to the railway Chekist demanding that my relative be left alone. The form of the Central Committee played its part, and he was no longer disturbed. This episode illustrated for me Yagoda's system of covering the country with an information network.

Some time later I ran into Yagoda directly at meetings of the Supreme Council of Physical Culture. Since I was the representative of the Central Committee in the Supreme Soviet, then, as I wrote above, I easily pursued a line contrary to the opinions of the GPU. Yagoda was beaten and humiliated. But besides, having a definite opinion about the board of the GPU, I did not hide my extremely unfriendly attitude towards all this public. This caused a commotion in the board of the GPU. To have an enemy in the person of Stalin's assistant, who was also the secretary of the Politburo, the board of the GPU found extremely inconvenient for itself. We thought about how to be. In the end, it was decided that it would be more advantageous to make this mutual hostility open and official, thereby placing under suspicion any blow that I could inflict on them. Of course, they rightly feared that by secretary at the meetings of the troika and the Politburo, being constantly in contact with the secretaries of the Central Committee and members

of the Politburo, I could be very dangerous to them. In addition, they decided to play on the extreme suspicion of Stalin. Yagoda wrote a letter to Stalin on behalf of the GPU board. In the letter, the GPU collegium considered it their duty to warn Stalin and the Politburo that Politburo Secretary Bazhanov, in their common opinion, was a covert counter-revolutionary. They, unfortunately, cannot yet provide any evidence and rely more on their Chekist instinct and experience, but they believe that their

duty is to bring their conviction to the attention of the Central Committee. The letter was signed by Yagoda.

Stalin handed me the letter and said: "Read it." I've read. I was 23 years old. Stalin, who considered himself a great connoisseur of people, looked at me attentively. If there is some truth here, the young man will be embarrassed and begin to make excuses. On the contrary, I smiled and returned the letter to Stalin without saying anything. "What do you think about this?" Stalin asked. "Comrade Stalin," I replied with a slight hint of reproach, "you know Yagoda, you know, he's a bastard." "But all the same," Stalin said, "why does he write this?" - "I think for two reasons: on the one hand, he wants to plant some kind of suspicion about me; on the other hand, we encountered him at meetings of the Supreme Council of Physical Culture, where I, as a representative of the Central Committee and following the line of the Central Committee, achieved the abolition of his harmful positions: but he not only wants to take revenge on me in this way, but feeling that I do not feel the slightest respect and not the slightest sympathy, he wants to compromise in advance everything that I can tell you or the members of the Politburo about him.

Stalin found this explanation quite plausible. In addition, knowing Stalin, I did not doubt for a second that he really liked this whole turn of affairs: the secretary of the Politburo and the collegium of the GPU were in open hostility; there can be no doubt that the GPU will closely follow every step of the Secretary of the Politburo and, if anything, will immediately notify him; and the secretary of the Politburo, for his part, will not miss any opportunity to inform him if he learns anything suspicious in the practice of the GPU collegium. It was on this base that

my relations with the GPU were established: from time to time Yagoda informed Stalin about their confidence in my account, and Stalin indifferently passed these tsidulki to me. But I must also say that I was pleased when I read Yagoda's first

denunciation. The fact is that open hostility provided me with security in one respect. The GPU has enormous opportunities to arrange an accident - a car accident, a murder allegedly for the purpose of robbery (with dummy bandits), etc. After the announcement of open hostile actions by the GPU, all these possibilities disappeared - now Yagoda would pay with his head for an accident with me.

And shortly before this letter, I had such a case. In the Central Committee, groups for the study of foreign languages were arranged for employees. I've been to English and French study groups. In the English group, I met a very pretty young Latvian, Wanda Zvedre, who worked in the apparatus of the Central Committee. At this time I was quite free; Wanda and I liked each other, but both accepted it as just a pleasant adventure. Wanda was married to a major Chekist. She lived with her husband in the Lubyanka, in the house of the GPU - it had apartments for the most responsible Chekists. Wanda visited me, but somehow she invited me to her apartment in Lubyanka. I was curious to see how the Chekist leaders live in their house; I came to her in the evening after work. Wanda explained to me that her husband had gone on a business trip and offered to stay with her for the night. This seemed extremely suspicious to me - the husband, "unexpectedly" returning from a business trip, finding me in his wife's bed, could discharge his revolver at me, and everything would have gone like an ordinary story of a drama of jealousy; my husband would show that he has no idea who I am. Under the pretext of the need to work on some more urgent papers, I refused (however, I suspected not Wanda, but the GPU, which could take advantage of the opportunity). Now, after Yagoda's letter, the possibility of an accident or murder motivated by jealousy

disappeared. All the following years of my work were spent in open hostility with the GPU, and this was more

or less known to everyone. Stalin was quite used to this, and he was not at all embarrassed by such cases as, for example, the one that happened to Anna Georgievna Khutareva.

At the Higher Technical School I had a friend, a non-party student Pashka Zimakov. He was not involved in politics at all and was not interested. His mother, Anna Georgievna, after the death of her husband (Zimakov), married a very rich man, Ivan Andreevich Khutarev, the owner of a large factory of fine cloth in Sharapova Okhota near Moscow. During the civil war, Khutarev, fleeing the Bolsheviks, fled to the South, from there abroad, and lived in 1924 in Baden near Vienna. The wife was left with four little ones.

children; the wife of a "capitalist", she lived extremely poorly and

difficultly. Pashka Zimakov informs me - my mother really wants to see you. I'm coming. It turns out the following. In perfectly holy simplicity, Anna Georgievna, having taken a medical certificate from a doctor friend that the waters of the Baden resort near Vienna would be very useful for her state of health, comes to the administrative department of the Council and asks for a foreign passport to travel abroad for treatment. The council official reads her request: "Are you asking for a passport to travel with all four children?" - "Yes". "Are you crazy, citizen, or are you pretending to be crazy?" "Why? I want to go for treatment." "Okay, come back in a month."

The GPU issues the passport, and the request goes there for study. There, of course, they immediately find out - the bourgeois brazenly asks for permission to flee the country to her husband, a White Guard emigrant, and a capitalist. A month later, when she comes to the administrative department of the council, she is asked to go to some office, and there three Chekists begin a promising interrogation. From the interrogation it is immediately clear that they know everything about the husband and even that he lives in Baden. Chekists ask: "Are you mocking us?" The poor woman comes up with a saving idea: "You know, I'm not a party member and I don't understand anything in politics, but what if a prominent party member vouches for me?" "Who is this prominent party member?" the Chekists ask ironically. "This is Comrade Stalin's secretary." - "What? What is this number? Are you out of your mind, citizen?" "Yes, I assure you he can vouch for me." The Chekists look at each other: "Well, bring a guarantee - then we will

continue the conversation." All this Anna Georgievna tells me. I am fascinated - I have never met naivety within such limits. "So, then," I say, "you are asking me to guarantee that after a month of treatment you and your children will return to the USSR?" - "Yes". - "Are you going to your husband in order to stay there with your children and not return to the USSR?" - "Yes". Charming. "You understand," says Anna Georgievna, "I will disappear here with the children. Going to my husband is one salvation for me." "Okay," I say, "let me sign your paper." "And I," says Anna Georgievna, "I will pray to God for you all my life."

Then everything went like clockwork. Yagoda was immediately informed of my guarantee. I can imagine how maliciously Yagoda rubbed his hands. He immediately issued a foreign passport, and my Anna Georgievna left for Austria with all the children. Of course, when a month later she was reminded from the Soviet consulate that her visa had expired and she had to return, she replied that she was renouncing Soviet citizenship and remained abroad in an emigrant position. Yagoda was just waiting for

this, and Stalin was immediately sent a detailed report on how Bazhanov helped the potbelly woman to escape abroad. "What's the other story?" Stalin asked me, passing Yagoda's denunciation to me. "And this, Comrade Stalin, I wanted to check how stupid Yagoda is: if this bourgeois woman who wants to flee abroad, and Yagoda knows this, why does he sign a foreign passport for her and let her out? If, on the contrary, there is nothing wrong with her going out, then why blame me? Yagoda agrees to everything, if only to cause trouble to me, not understanding what a stupid position he puts himself in. That was the end of it - Stalin did not pay any attention to this episode. I very soon realized what kind of power

the GPU was taking over the non-Party population, which was given over to its complete arbitrariness. It was also clear why no personal freedoms were possible under the communist regime: everything was nationalized, everyone, in order to live and feed, was obliged to be in the public service. The slightest free-thinking, the slightest desire for personal freedom - and over a person the threat of deprivation of the opportunity to work and, consequently, to live. All this is surrounded by a gigantic information network of secret agents, everything is known about everyone, everything is in the hands of the GPU. And at the same time, taking this power, starting to build a huge Gulag empire, the GPU tries to inform the top of the party as little as possible about what it is doing. Camps are developing - a huge extermination system - the party is reported on a cunning way, at the expense of the counter-revolution, to have free labor for the construction of the five-year plan; and by the way, "reforging" - after all, the camps are "correctional labor camps"; what is really in them? Yes, nothing special: the party is spreading a stupid Jewish anecdote about NEPmen who say that "Sparrow Hills is better than the Solovychikov Monastery." At

I have the impression that the party elite is pleased that the GPU barrier (from the population) is working excellently, and has no desire to know what is really going on in the bowels of the GPU: everyone is happy reading Pravda's official chatter about the steel sword of the revolution (GPU), always vigilantly guarding the gains of the revolution. I sometimes try to talk with members of the

Politburo about the fact that the population has been placed under the complete and uncontrolled power of the GPU. This conversation is of no interest to anyone. I soon become convinced that, fortunately, my conversations are attributed to my hostility towards the GPU, and therefore they do not turn against me; otherwise I would quickly become suspicious: "intellectual softness", "lack of real Bolshevik vigilance towards enemies" (and who is not the enemy?) and so on. Through long and constant training, the brains of the members of the Communist Party are firmly directed in one definite direction. Not the Bolshevik who read and accepted Marx (who is really capable of mastering this boring and hopeless nonsense), but the one who is trained in the continuous search and pursuit of all sorts of enemies. And the work of the GPU is constantly growing and developing as something normal for the whole party - this is the essence of communism, to constantly grab someone by the throat; how can one blame the GPU for anything when it copes brilliantly with this task? I finally understand that the point is not that the Chekists are scum, but that the system (man is a wolf to man) requires and allows scum to perform these functions.

I say so many times that Yagoda is a criminal and a scoundrel, the real role of Yagoda in the creation of the All-Russian Gulag is so clear and well-known that it seems that nothing can be said in favor of this subject. Meanwhile, I really liked one single episode from his life - an episode in his favor. It was in March 1938 when the time finally came for the comedy of Stalin's "trial" of Yagoda. At the "court" the functions of the prosecutor are performed by a humanoid creature - Vyshinsky.

Vyshinsky: "Tell me, traitor and traitor Yagoda, have you really never experienced the slightest regret, not the slightest repentance in all your vile and treacherous activities? And now, when you are finally answering before the proletarian court for all your vile crimes, do you not feel the slightest regret about what you have done?"

Yagoda: "Yes, I'm sorry, I'm very sorry..."

Vyshinsky: "Attention, Comrade Judges. Traitor and traitor Yagoda regrets. What do you regret, spy and criminal Yagoda?" Yagoda: "I am very sorry ... I am very sorry that when I could do this, I didn't shoot."

It must be explained that someone, but Yagoda, who himself organized a long series of such the processes, there were no, even the slightest illusions about the results of the "trial".

My personal situation is paradoxical: the GPU hates me, the maniacally suspicious Stalin pays no attention to the denunciations of the GPU, all the secrets of power are in my hands. And I am seriously studying the question of how I can help to overthrow this government.

However, I have no illusions. The masses of the people, no matter how far this slave-owning system has gone, will not be able to throw off power; the time of barricades and the peak has long passed; not only tanks are in power, but also a huge, unprecedented force of the police; and besides, the rulers will stop at nothing to retain power - this is not Louis XVI, who did not want to shed the blood of his subjects; these will shed - as much as they like.

The coup could only come from above - from the Central Committee. But even this is almost impossible: for this, people who want to eliminate communism must hide the fact that they are anti-communists and win a majority in the Central Committee. I see the entire personnel of the Bolshevik leadership; I do not see people who would be inclined to do this.

What about myself? A historical event gives the enemy of communism, in my person, the opportunity to know all its secrets, and to be present at all meetings of the Politburo and Plenums of the Central Committee. I can make a solid bomb (by the way, I sometimes still work at the Higher Technical Institute in the laboratories of qualitative and quantitative analysis; there is both nitric acid and glycerin there) and carry it in a briefcase to a meeting - no one dares to wonder what

portfolio of the secretary of the Politburo. But it is absolutely clear to me that this does not make the slightest sense - another Politburo will be elected immediately, another composition of the Central Committee, and they will be no worse and no better than this one - you cannot kill the system with a bomb. I am indifferent to the various factions of the ruling elite: both the Trotskys and the Stalins promote communism in the same way.

Finally, to select and organize your group in the party elite is a completely hopeless matter - the fifth or tenth will run to report to Stalin. And besides - I am deprived of the opportunity to do anything hidden - the GPU is closely watching my every step in the hope of finding something against me.

What can I do? Only one thing - to continue to hide my views and continue to pursue a Bolshevik career with the hope of becoming Stalin's heir and then turn everything around. What happened next showed that this was not a fiction at all: Malenkov, having taken the place of secretary of the Politburo after me, is doing just that: that is, he is doing the first part of the program - he normally becomes Stalin's heirs (by Stalin's death, he is the second person in the country, the first secretary of the Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of Ministers); on the contrary, being a worthy disciple of Stalin and a Stalinist, he is completely alien to the second part of my program - having taken Stalin's place, turn everything around. And I reject this possibility. I know Stalin

and see where he is going. He is still softly spreading, but I see that he is an immoral and cruel Asian satrap. How much more he will be able to commit crimes over the country - and it will be necessary to participate in everything. I'm sure it won't work for me. To be under Stalin and with Stalin, one must develop all the Bolshevik qualities in oneself to a high degree - neither morality, nor friendship, nor human feelings - one must be a wolf. And waste your life on it. Don't want. And then what is left for me to do in this country? To be a cog in the car and help it spin? I don't want either. There is only one way out: to go abroad; maybe there I will find opportunities to fight against this wolf-faced socialism. But it's not that

easy either. First you need to leave the Politburo, the Stalinist secretariat and the Central Committee. I take this decision firmly. Stalin refuses my desire to leave. But I understand that the

point is not at all that I am irreplaceable - for Stalin there are no irreplaceable or very necessary people; the fact is that I know all his secrets, and if I leave, it is necessary to introduce a new person into all these secrets; that's what makes him uncomfortable. For the technique of leaving, I find help from Tovstukha: he is very happy with my desire to leave. He wants to take over the entire secretariat of Stalin, but as long as I am the secretary of the Politburo, I have all

the most important functions, and the apparatus, the office of the Politburo, which are subordinate to me. Tovstukha sees how everything is arranged for him with my departure. True, he is not capable of secretarial work at Politburo meetings, but with my departure he will take over the office of the Politburo, and the functions of Politburo secretary will be reorganized so that he will be the master of the apparatus. It happens like this. When I go on summer vacation, Timokhin, secretary of the Orgburo, replaces me. In order to replace the secretary of the Orgburo, Malenkov's smart wife, Lera Golubtsova, who works in the Orgraspred, using her acquaintance with German Tikhomirnov (Molotov's second secretary - I spoke about this at the beginning of the book), promotes her husband to the position of temporary secretary of the Orgburo. Tovstukha, having studied Malenkov, decides to take him to the Politburo. Malenkov is appointed protocol secretary of the Politburo - only to secretary at meetings; a stenographer is brought in to help him. His functions are limited: both he and the apparatus are subordinate to Tovstukha. Control over the execution of Politburo resolutions, which is too much connected with me, ceases. Malenkov does not yet have access to Stalin's secrets and will not have it for a long time, which Stalin is quite satisfied with, and therefore the reform does not raise any objections to him.

Once in the Politburo, being all the time in contact with the members of the Politburo, all the time in the sight of Stalin, Malenkov makes a gradual but sure career. In addition, he is a loyal and one hundred percent Stalinist. In 1934 he became an assistant to Stalin, in 1939 secretary of the Central Committee, in 1947 a candidate of the Politburo, in 1948 a member of the Politburo, and in the last years before Stalin's death, Stalin's first deputy, both as first secretary of the Central Committee and as chairman of the Council of Ministers, then is formally the second person in the country and Stalin's heir. True, after the death of Stalin, the inheritance did not come out, as heirs

The Politburo did not accept him, and he remained only the chairman of the Council of Ministers. Three years later, in 1956, while trying to overthrow Khrushchev, he lost power and became the director of an electric station

somewhere in the province. Having left the Politburo, I still continue to be registered with Stalin's secretariat, trying to do as little as possible in it and pretending that my main job is now in the Narkomfin. But until the end of 1925, I continued to serve as secretary in a number of commissions of the Central Committee, mostly permanent ones. They don't release me from them for a long time - they ask for a solid acquaintance with all the past content of their work from the secretary. Only at the beginning of 1926 can I say that I finally left the Central Committee. Stalin is indifferent to my departure.

It's funny that no one really knows whether I continue to be behind the Stalinist secretariat or not, whether I left or not left, and if I left, then whether I will return (this happened with others - for example, Tovstukha seemed to have gone to the Lenin Institute, but you look, again in the Stalinist secretariat, and even stronger than before). But I know very well that I have finally left; and I'm going to leave this country.

Now I look at everything through the eyes of an internal emigrant. I sum up.

I knew many people in the Bolshevik elite, and among them talented and gifted people, quite a few honest and decent people. The latter I state with astonishment. I have no doubt about the future unenviable fate of these people - they are essentially not suitable for this system (although I should also admit that the fate of everyone else will not be better). They are drawn, like me, into this huge machine by mistake and are now its cogs. But my eyes are already wide open, and I see what almost all of them do not see: what must inevitably give a further logical development of the application of the doctrine.

How do I see and understand the ongoing evolution and the ways of development of power and its apparatus? There are two different questions here. First, the mechanism of power, the true mechanism, and not something that is passed off as power for tactical reasons. The coup was carried out by the Leninist group of professional revolutionaries. Having seized power and taken over the administration of the country, having nationalized and seized everything, it needs a huge and numerous administrative apparatus, and consequently, numerous cadres of the party. The doors to the party are wide open, and the intense communist propaganda easily wins over and attracts the masses of people. The country is politically virgin; The very first phrases of party agitators and propagandists, uttered before ordinary people who have never thought about political questions, seem to them a revelation that suddenly opens their eyes to everything that is most important. Any other propaganda that says anything else is shut down and persecuted as counter-revolutionary. The party is growing rapidly at the expense of new believers in politically inexperienced people. They are filled with all organs of various authorities - civil, military, economic, trade union, etc. In the center is the Leninist group, which heads numerous departments and organizations. Formally, she rules through the organs of power, which for the public bears the name of the Soviet - people's commissariats, executive committees, their departments and ramifications. But there are many of them, and the center should cover not only their entire range, but also everything that does not fit into them; Cominterns and profinterns, the army, newspapers, trade unions, the propaganda apparatus, the economy, etc., etc. This is possible only in the Central Committee of the Party, which includes all the main leaders of everything. But the Central Committee is cumbersome and broad, a small leading group is needed, and now the Politburo is already allocated for this, which replaces Lenin with his two or three assistants who ruled for the first two years (Lenin, Sverdlov, Trotsky). The Politburo, elected in March 1919, quickly becomes a real government. In essence, for Lenin and his group, this still does not change anything, it only streamlines the matter of state administration. As before, management takes place through bodies called the Soviet government. Throughout the civil war, little change occurs in this scheme. The Party apparatus is still in its infancy, and its functions are service, not managerial. Things begin to change with the end of the civil war. A real party apparatus is being created and is rapidly beginning to grow. Here, the centralizing activity in the matter of administration, which is carried out by the Politburo in the center, begins to be taken over in the regions by the regional and territorial Bureaus of the Central Committee, in the provinces by the Bureau of Gubernia Committees. And in the provincial committees, the secretary comes first - he begins

to become the master of his province instead of the chairman of the province executive committee and various authorized representatives of the center. The new charter of 1922 gives the final form to this change. The period of "secretary power" begins. Only in Moscow it is not the general secretary of the party who is at the head of everything, but Lenin. But in 1922, an illness incapacitates Lenin; The Politburo becomes the central authority without Lenin. This means the struggle for inheritance. Zinoviev and Kamenev, who have seized power, believe that their power is secured by what they have in the hands of the Politburo. Stalin and Molotov see further. The Politburo is elected by the Central Committee. Keep the majority of the Central Committee in your hands, and you will elect the Politburo as you please. Place your secretaries of the Gubernia Committees everywhere, and the majority of the Congress and the Central Committee will be with you.

For some reason, Zinoviev does not want to see this. He is so absorbed in the struggle for the destruction of Trotsky according to the old Leninist recipes - squabbling within the Central Committee, that he does not see the Stalinist work of selecting all his members in the party apparatus (and it lasts 1922, and 1923, and 1924, and 1925). As a result, in 1922, 1923 and 1924 the country was ruled by a troika, and in 1925, with its break, by the Politburo. But from January 1926, after the congress, Stalin reaps the fruits of his many years of work - his Central Committee, his Politburo - and becomes a leader (not yet a sovereign master, members of the Politburo still have weight in the party, members of the Central Committee still mean something). But while the struggle was going on in the center, secretarial power in the localities was finally strengthened. The first secretary of the provincial committee is the complete master of his province, all questions of the province are decided by the Bureau of the Gubernia Committee. The country is now ruled not only by the party, but by the party apparatus. So what is next? Where

does it grow? I know Stalin well -

now he is on the right path to strengthening his sole power. Theoretically, his overthrow is possible only through a party congress - he will stop convening congresses when all power is in his hands. Then there will be only one power in the country: no longer the party and not the party apparatus, but Stalin and only Stalin. And he will manage through the one whom he finds more convenient. Through the Politburo or through their secretaries.

But what will be the fate of all these masses of party members. which the party absorbed after the revolution and which were discussed above. We can guess about it by understanding the second question. The second question is about

the essence of power and the evolution of this essence. When

you get to know the personality of Lenin or Stalin well, you are struck by the amazing, seemingly manic desire for power to which everything is subordinated in the lives of these two people. In fact, there is nothing particularly surprising in this thirst for power. Both Lenin and Stalin are people of their own doctrine, Marxist doctrine, their system of thought, which determines their whole life. What does the doctrine require? A revolution in the entire life of society, which can and must be carried out only through violence. Violence that will be committed against society by some active, organized minority, but under one indispensable, mandatory condition - having previously taken state power into their own hands. This is the alpha and omega: nothing can be done, says the doctrine, without taking power. You will do everything, you will change everything, taking power into your own hands. Their whole life is built on this basis. Power comes into the hands of Lenin, and then Stalin, not only because they are maniacally, boundlessly striving for it, but also because in the party they are the most complete, most striking embodiment of

this basic action of the party doctrine. Power is everything, beginning and end. Lenin and Stalin live by this all their lives. Everyone else has to follow

them next.

But power is taken by an active minority with the help of violence and is retained by the same active minority with the help of violence against the vast majority of the population. The minority (party) recognizes only force. The population can have any bad attitude towards the social system established by the party, the government will be afraid of this negative attitude and maneuver (Lenin - NEP) only as long as it considers that its police system to cover the country is not strong enough and that there is a risk of losing power. When the system of police terror grips the whole country, one can use violence without hesitation (Stalin - collectivization, terror of the 30s), and force the country to live according to the orders of the party, even if it costs millions of victims.

The essence of power is violence. Over whom? According to the doctrine, above all, over some kind of class

enemy. Above the bourgeois, capitalist, landowner, nobleman, former officer, engineer, priest, prosperous peasant (kulak), dissident and not adapting to the new social order (counter-revolutionary, White Guard, saboteur, wrecker, social traitor, hanger-on of the class enemy, ally of imperialism and reactions, etc., etc.); and after the liquidation and exhaustion of all these categories, more and more new ones can be created: the middle peasant can become a sub-kulakist, the poor peasant in the countryside can become an enemy of the collective farms, therefore, a frustrater and saboteur of socialist construction, a worker without socialist enthusiasm can become an agent of the class enemy. And in the party? Deviators, deviationists, factionalists, corrupt Trotskyists, right-wing oppositionists, left-wing oppositionists, traitors, foreign spies, lustful bastards - all the time you need to destroy someone, shoot, rot in prisons, in concentration camps - this is the essence and pathos of communism.

But at the beginning of the revolution, hundreds of thousands of people joined the party not for this, but believing that some better society would be built. Gradually (but not very soon) it turns out that the basis of everything is deception. But believers go on believing; if the devil knows what is going on around, it is probably the fault of wild and ignorant performers, and the idea is good, the leaders want the best, and we must fight to correct the shortcomings. How? Protesting, joining the opposition, fighting within the party. But the path of oppositions in the party is a disastrous path. And now all these believers are gradually becoming people of those categories that the authorities declare enemies (or agents of class enemies); and all these believers are also doomed - their way into a common giant meat grinder, which Comrade Stalin will expertly manage.

Gradually, the party (and especially its leading cadres) is divided into two categories: those who will destroy, and those who will be destroyed. Of course, everyone who cares most about their own skin and their own well-being will try to join the first category (not everyone succeeds: the meat grinder will grab right and left, who gets under the arm); those who believed in something and wanted something better for the people will sooner or later fall into the second category. This, of course,

does not mean that all selfish and scoundrels will safely survive; suffice it to say that most of the KGB execution cases of masters will also fall into the meat grinder (but they are because they are too close to it). But all more or less decent people with remnants of conscience and human feelings will surely perish. In my position as secretary of the Politburo, I

encountered the entire party elite. I must say that there were a lot of nice people in it (I do not make a final judgment - I'm talking about how I saw them at that moment). The devil pushed the talented organizer and engineer Krasin to Lenin's gang of professional parasites. Rarely have I met a more talented organizer, grasping everything on the fly and understanding everything, than Syrtsov. And no matter what the attorney at law Brilliant (Sokolnikov) undertook, he brilliantly coped with everything. Others were less brilliant, but decent, pleasant and friendly. Ordzhonikidze was direct and honest.

Rudzutak - an excellent worker, modest and honest, Stanislav Kossior, who firmly kept his naive faith in communism (when he was arrested by the Chekists, in spite of any torture, he did not want to make false accusations against himself; the Chekists brought his sixteen-year-old daughter and raped him in front of him; daughter committed suicide; Kossior broke down and signed everything that was demanded of him).

With almost all members of the party leadership, I have excellent personal relations, friendly and pleasant. Even the Stalinist conscious bureaucrats - Molotov, Kaganovich, Kuibyshev I can't reproach for anything, they were always very nice.

And at the same time, didn't soft, cultured and pleasant Sokolnikov, when he commanded the army, carry out mass executions in the South of Russia during the civil war? And Ordzhonikidze in the Caucasus? A terrible

thing is the wolf doctrine and belief in it. Only when you understand all this well and know all these people well, do you see what the doctrine that preaches violence, revolution and the destruction of "class" enemies inevitably turns people into.

Chapter 14 Fleeing the socialist paradise

FICTION. MAYAKOVSKY. EISENSTEIN. COMPETITION WITH "BOURGEOIS ATHLETES". TRIP TO NORWAY. FIRST ATTEMPT TO RUN. ALYONKA. GOING ABROAD NORMALLY IS NOT POSSIBLE

In June 1925, the Politburo decided to put things in order in fiction. A commission of the Central Committee was singled out, which formulated a resolution "On the policy of the party in the field of fiction." essence of the resolution. which the Politburo approved was that "there is no neutral literature" and Soviet literature should be a means of communist propaganda. The composition of the commission is amusing: its chairman was the head of the Red Army, Frunze (until then, he had not been caught in any relationship with literature), members - Lunacharsky and Vareikis. Vareikis was not a very cultured person. But being the secretary of some provincial committee (I think it was in Voronezh), he wrote an editorial in the local provincial party newspaper directed against yet another opposition; and he ended the article by addressing this opposition with a quotation from Blok's Scythians: "Hear how your skeleton crunches in our heavy tender paws." Zinoviev at a meeting of the Politburo cited this case as an anecdotal pinnacle of the mediocrity of an apparatchik. This was enough for Stalin to nominate Vareikis to the post of head of the Press Department of the Central Committee, where Vareikis stayed for some time. Having become an internal emigrant, I would not mind meeting the best writers and poets of the country who did not accept

communism, and for whom I felt deep respect: Bulgakov, Akhmatova. But, alas, I had already decided my flight abroad, and my close acquaintance with them might have caused them great trouble after my flight. On the contrary, I could freely get acquainted with communist writers - they did not risk anything. Mayakovsky of the first period, pre-revolutionary and futurist, I, of course, did not know. Encyclopedias according to state that he became a Bolshevik from 1908. At this time he was fourteen years old.

Judging by his poems of this, pre-revolutionary period, he was in any case on the right track to become a professional revolutionary and a real Bolshevik. He wrote that he was very interested in the question: "... how to turn out and shake out the pockets of the neighbor without difficulty and cunning." In the same way, he had already formulated what was normal for a professional

revolutionary attitude to work:

And when they tell me about work, and more,
and more. Like horseradish rubbed on a rusty
grater, I answer, affectionately taking
the shoulder: Do you buy to five?

I recognized the poet only in the second period, post-revolutionary, when he, with a party card in his pocket, cheerfully and animatedly directed poetry along the communist channel. In 1921, the party was purged, and Mayakovsky "announced a purge of modern poetry." It was a propaganda, not devoid of wit, mockery of poets who were not overshadowed by the grace of communism. At that time I was a student of the Higher Technical School. "Purge" took place in the audience of the Polytechnic Museum. The audience was almost completely student. Carrying out the "cleansing" in alphabetical order and finishing along the way with Akhmatova, who, as if in the revolution, saw only that "everything was looted, sold, betrayed," Mayakovsky reached Blok, who had died shortly before. "Mayakovsky," some student squeaks, "the dead are either good or nothing." "Yes, yes," Mayakovsky says, "that's what I will do: I will say something about the deceased that represents almost nothing and at the same time characterizes him very well. I lived at the time the story is about, on Gorokhovaya Street, not far from Blok. We got together to bake pancakes. I did not want to do the kitchen, and I made a bet that by the time the pancakes were ready, I would have time to run to Blok and take from him a book of his poems with a dedication.

Ran. Come to Blok. So and so, dear Alexander Alexandrovich; highly appreciating your amazing talent (you already know, if I want, I can fill it in), etc., etc., you would, of course, give me a book of your poems with a dedication. "Good, good," says Blok; takes a book of his poems, goes into the next room, sits down and thinks. Ten minutes, twelve minutes ... And I have a bet and pancakes. I stick my head in the door and say: "Alexander Alexandrovich, I would like something ..." Finally I wrote. I grabbed the book and ran home. I won the bet. I see that Blok wrote: "To Vladimir Mayakovsky, about whom I think a lot." And it took seventeen minutes to think about it! Whether it's me: the poet Kusikov, who is present here, asked me for my book with a dedication. Please. I immediately took "Everything composed by Vladimir Mayakovsky" and

wrote:

"There are many great tastes and small tastes in the world; Who likes me, and who likes Kusikov. Vladimir Mayakovsky. I met the poet later. He was undeniably talented. He was rude and cynical. In

During the NEP, he composed advertising slogans for Soviet trade bodies for a bribe:

"Nowhere but in Mosselprom", "Before you go to the bride, visit Rezinotrest". But, carried away by the genre, he composed in the same way for friends and acquaintances:

Unexpected sleep is the cause of fires.
Do not read Utkin and Zharov at night.

Utkin could not bear it at all. In the house of poets, Utkin read his last, extremely well-meaning poem:

Covered with foggy yarn The
entire left slope, coastal. A sentry
walks along the slope with a
chased gait.

A Soviet sentry on the banks of the Dniester is killed by a White Guard shooter from Romanian coast. Utkin drowns the White Guard in Soviet patriotic indignation.

Utkin finished. Now is the time to clap. Suddenly, the deliberately thick bass of Mayakovsky is heard: "Try, try, Utkin, you will be Gusev" (member of the Central Committee Gusev was in charge at that time of the Press Department of the Central

Committee). The last time I met the poet was at VOKS, where I went to see Olga Davydovna Kameneva on some business. The poet was released abroad for the next feeding, but saving currency, they supplied him, in his opinion, not enough, and the poet expressed his displeasure in terms that were not very literary.

I also met Eisenstein, whom the Western European progressives falsely and stubbornly turn into a genius. I met him already in 1923. Eisenstein at that time directed the Proletkult Theater.

Taking Ostrovsky's play "Enough Stupidity for Every Wise Man", Eisenstein turned it into a diverse farce: the text had almost nothing to do with Ostrovsky, the artists clowned around, walked the tightrope, and conducted political and anti-religious agitation. Not only the staging, but also the text were Eisenstein's. Unfortunately, the text did not shine with anything other than Bolshevik reliability. Throwing down the anti-Soviet emigrants, the artists sang:

Paris on the Seine,
And we are on
the Seine. In
Poincare we have
one salvation. We were people

And they became
trash, When they
kicked our teeth.

And for anti-religious propaganda, an actor dressed
mullah, who sang to the tune of "Alla Verda":

Judas is a good businessman:
He sold Christ, bought galoshes.

Even then I had the impression that Eisenstein had not so much respect for the commercial talents of Judas as envy. Eisenstein himself did not seem to have any other talents. Turning to the cinema and learning

from the Agitprop of the Central Committee what is now required ("no propaganda revolutionary films; cook up"), Eisenstein concocted "The Battleship Potemkin", a rather ordinary propaganda piece that the left-wing filmmakers of the West (and are there any right-wing ones?) proclaimed a masterpiece (again "revolutionary" film, it goes without saying, a masterpiece). I saw him at the premiere (if I'm not mistaken, for some reason it was given at the Meyerhold Theater, and not at the cinema) and by chance I was next to Rudzutak; We exchanged opinions after watching. "Of course, propaganda," Rudzutak agreed, "but a 100% revolutionary film has long been needed." So the order was fulfilled, and in the film everything was in place - and brutalized soldiers, and the vile tsarist guardsmen, and valiant sailors - the future "beauty and pride of the revolution" (though only in the time of **Almaz** When Stalin's satrap power was being , not in the days of **Kronstadt**).

strengthened, Eisenstein twisted the "General Line" (for the uninitiated - the wise line of the **General** Secretary of the Central Committee Comrade Stalin), in which all of Russia flourishes and prospers under the brilliant leadership of the Leader (it must be said that at this time 1928-1929 was still there were oppositions, it was possible not to flatter, the Bukharins and Rykovs did not agree aloud with the beginning of the Stalinist pogrom of the countryside, and Stalin's genius was in a hurry to discover only rare sycophants by vocation). Needless to say, Eisenstein's Ivan the Terrible was made to praise and justify the Stalinist terror, history repeats itself: just as Ivan the Terrible, as if taking care of the needs of Great Russia, impaled and chopped off the heads of the boyars, Stalin also shot his Bolshevik boyars, also traitors to the country. The only justification for all this vileness: Eisenstein saved (and really saved) his own skin. But all his life he was a coward and a sycophant of the lowest style. By the way, he could have saved his own skin in another way: after all, in the thirties he was released into Hollywood, and then he played revolutionary films in Mexico. Could have saved himself by staying abroad - no, he returned to crawl on his stomach in front of the Stalinist executioners. At the end of 1925, the Supreme Council of Physical Culture received an invitation from Norway for Russian skaters to participate in the world championship in speed skating. At that time, Russian speed skaters were almost the best in the world (this can always be judged

with a sufficient degree of accuracy by the time shown for the same classical distances). Until that moment, according to the dogma adopted by the red Sportintern, which united all the revolutionary workers' sports organizations, competitions between "bourgeois" athletes and "reds" had never been allowed. I decided it was time to change this order.

Podvoisky was at the head of the Sportintern. At the top of the government, his name was usually accompanied by the epithet "old fool." Before the revolution, he was a military man, but a Bolshevik. During the October Revolution, he was a member of the Petrograd Military Revolutionary Committee, which led the uprising. Because of this, he considered himself a historical figure. Meanwhile, due to his stupidity and inability to perform any useful work, the authorities always experienced difficulty - what to do with him. Finally found for

him something like a sinecure - the head of Vseobuch. It was an institution engaged in the military training of the civilian population. Podvoisky was very hurt and offended. - He applied for a responsible leadership position. When the Sportintern was created, Podvoisky was put in charge, and this somewhat satisfied his pride. When Podvoisky was still in Vseobuch, he began his career as the General Manager of Vseobuch

Yagoda. He stayed there for a short time. Taking advantage of his kinship with Yakov Sverdlov, Yagoda moved to the Head of the GPU, and there he found his true path. But from old memory he retained good relations with Podvoisky and had a strong influence on Podvoisky.

In particular, he convinced Podvoisky that the Red workers' organizations should not compete with "bourgeois" sportsmen, since this would supposedly introduce bourgeois disintegration into the revolutionary labor force. The Sports International gave this directive, and the fraternal communist parties accepted it as a directive from Moscow. Therefore, it was strictly carried out. The committee that organized the world skating championship knew this, but quite sportily

hoped that the world championship would be real only if Russian skaters, the strongest, took part in it. Hence his invitation.

At a meeting of the Supreme Council of Physical Culture, I insisted that this invitation be accepted, despite Yagoda's objections. Podvoisky raised a scandal: "You are disrupting our entire political line of work." The secretary of the Sportintern, Hans Lemberg, especially ran to all instances of the Comintern, proving this. It was the same blue-eyed Russian German with whom, as I wrote above, during the Kronstadt uprising five years ago, I carried armed guards at the factory. In 1924, already being both the secretary of the Politburo and a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Physical Culture, I met him on the sports grounds. We talked about my line of recreating old sports organizations and developing the sport. He declared himself an ardent supporter of this policy. In order to slightly neutralize the stupid and stubborn Podvoisky, I through the Central Committee carried out the appointment of Lemberg as Secretary of the Sportintern. Lemberg turned out to be an intriguer and immediately went over to the side of Podvoisky and Yagoda.

But in the Comintern, they graciously refrained from participating in these disputes, answering Podvoisky and Lemberg that this was a question that the Central Committee of the Party should decide. It is hopeless to apply to the Central Committee - there I would always carry out my point of view. Yagoda chose this detour. This dispute between the chairmen of the Supreme Council and the Sportintern, Semashko and Podvoisky, was portrayed as a conflict between two heads of departments, and Podvoisky asked the Central Control Commission to resolve this issue "in a conflict manner." Since the Presidium of the Central Control Commission included Chekists, friends of Yagoda and members of the collegium of the GPU Peters and Latsis, Yagoda hoped that the Central Control Commission would recognize Semashko as wrong, since to interfere in the functions of an international organization outside of competencies.

On the eve of the meeting of the Central Control Commission, I go to Stalin and tell him: "Comrade Stalin! I am a representative of the Central Committee in the Supreme Council of Physical Education. We had a conflict with Sportintern. We believe that the workers' sports organizations can compete with the bourgeois ones, the Sportintern is against it. Tomorrow the Central Control Commission will consider this question. I want to know your opinion." Stalin replies: "Why not compete? We compete politically with the bourgeoisie, and not without success, we compete economically, we compete wherever possible. Why not compete in sports? This is clear - only a fool does not understand this. I say: "Comrade Stalin, allow me to present your opinion at the meeting of the Central Control Commission tomorrow, as you expressed it." Stalin says: "Please."

The next day our question was examined at the Presidium of the Central Control Commission. Gusev presides (Yaroslavsky should have presided, but the cunning and cowardly little man evaded - the matter is somehow slippery and unclear: it is not clear who is behind the litigants). Podvoisky sets out the essence of the matter, what and why the conflict is. Then Semashko presents the point of view of the Supreme Council. Yagoda supports Podvoisky. Mekhonoshin (representative of the military department in the Supreme Council) defends our point of view. Gradually, one by one, all interested participants speak out. I am silent. Gusev keeps looking at me and

obviously waiting for me to say. And I don't take a word. Finally, Gusev could not stand it and said: "It would be very interesting to know what the representative of the Central Committee of the party in the Supreme Council thinks about this." I say, "There is no particular need for me to develop my point of view. She is the same as the other members of the Presidium. But perhaps the meeting will be interested to know what Comrade Stalin thinks about this. "Oh, yes, of course, of course!" - "So, yesterday I specifically asked Comrade Stalin what he thinks on this issue; he answered literally the following and so resolved his opinion at the meeting and conveyed: why not compete? We compete with the bourgeoisie on all lines; why not compete in the sports line? Only fool this

does not understand".

The berry turned crimson red. The members of the Presidium of the Central Control Commission made an intelligent and satisfied face, and Gusev hastened to say: "So, comrades, I think the question is quite clear, and everyone will agree if I formulate our decision in such a way that Comrade Podvoisky is wrong, and Comrade Semashko is right and takes a position that is in full agreement with the party line. No objections?" There were no objections and the meeting ended there.

Semashko and the Presidium of the Supreme Council convince me that I should go to Norway as the captain of the skating team. Since there will be delicate conversations with the leadership of the Norwegian Communist Party, which needs to explain the change in the policy of the Sportintern (in the Scandinavian countries, sports, and especially winter sports - skiing and skating - play a very important role). I agree, I go to Molotov and, just in case, carry out the decision of the Organizing Bureau of the Central Committee on my sending as the captain of this team.

You have to leave in a day or two. All the questions of my life become an edge, because I immediately decide that this is an opportunity for me to go abroad and stay there, shaking off the ashes of the socialist fatherland from my feet. But I have one extreme

difficulty - my novel. In Soviet Russia, I had only one novel, this one. She is called Andreeva, Alyonka, and she is twenty years old.

The story of Alyonka is as follows. Her father was a general and director of the Putilov Military Plant. During the Civil War, he fled from the Reds with his wife and daughter to the South of Russia. There, at the end of the civil war in the Caucasus, he literally died of starvation, and his wife went crazy. Fifteen-year-old daughter Alyonka was picked up by a group of Komsomol members who were traveling to Moscow for the congress and brought to Moscow. The girl was assigned to the Komsomol, and she began to work in the central office of the Komsomol. She was extremely beautiful and intelligent, but her nervous balance after all that she had experienced left much to be desired.

When she was seventeen years old, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Komsomol Comrade Pyotr Smorodin fell in love with her and asked her to become his wife. What happened. When she was nineteen years old, she went to work in the apparatus of the Central Committee of the party for some kind of technical work. Here I met her. The romance that arose between us led to the fact that she left her Currant. True, we did not live with her. I lived in the 1st House of Soviets, and nearby was the House of Soviets, reserved for the leaders of the Central Committee of the Komsomol. She had a room there, and next to her lived all her friends, to whose company she was accustomed.

Our romance has been going on for a year and a half. But Alyonka had no idea about my political evolution and considered me a model communist. There was not the slightest possibility of telling her that I wanted to run abroad. I came up with this stratagem.

In recent months, I transferred Alyonka from the Central Committee to work at Narkomfin, as secretary of the Market Institute. She liked this work very much and fascinated her very much. I thought up a business trip for her to Finland in order to collect materials there about the monetary reform, which, allegedly, were very much needed by the department. Through Narkomfin, I spent this business trip instantly. I hoped that it would pass through the GPU as well (Yagoda signs foreign official passports), especially since I am going to Norway, and she is going to Finland. I expected to meet her on the way back in Helsingfors and only here reveal to her that I was staying abroad; and here to offer her a choice: stay with me or return to Moscow. Naturally, if she decided to return, all risks would disappear for her - by this she would prove that she does not share my counter-revolutionary views and is not an accomplice in my leaving Soviet Russia.

A day passes, my team is ready. These are three skaters: Yakov Melnikov, currently the strongest skater in the world, especially in the sprint (500 meters), Platon Ippolitov, who is very strong in the middle (1500 meters), and the young Red Army soldier Kushin, showing the best times in the sprint (500 meters). long distances (5000 and 10000 meters). We must leave quickly. Otherwise, we will be late for Trondheim, where the championship will take place. But my passport must be signed by Yagoda. And when I call the GPU, I can't get anything about my passport, except that it is "on signature" with Comrade Yagoda, and I can't get Comrade Yagoda over the phone, he doesn't even approach the "turntable". I quickly figure out what's going on. Yagoda does this on purpose to disrupt our trip. If we don't leave today, we'll be late for Trondheim. What Yagoda needs.

I go to Molotov and explain to him how Yagoda, by delaying my passport, is trying to disrupt our trip. I remind Molotov that I am going according to the decision of the Organizing Bureau of the Central Committee. Molotov picks up the phone and connects with Yagoda. He says very dryly to Yagoda: "Comrade Yagoda, if you think that you can frustrate the decision of the Central Committee in this way, you are mistaken. If in fifteen minutes Comrade Bazhanov's passport is not on my desk, I will transfer the case against you to the Central Control Commission for deliberately disrupting the

decision of the Central Committee of the Party. But Molotov said to me: "Wait here, comrade Bazhanov, it won't be long." Indeed, ten minutes later, rattling with heavy boots, the GPU courier appears: "To Comrade Molotov, it is extremely urgent, personally in my own hands, with a receipt on the envelope." My passport is in the envelope. Molotov grins. We leave the same day. We get to

Oslo in the evening on the eve of the day when the championship is played. But we cannot get to Trondheim - the last trains to Trondheim have already left, but we cannot find a free airplane - they are all there, in Trondheim. We have to content ourselves with competing with a weak work team. But the times that our team shows are better than the times at the world championship. Newspapers are arguing who won the championship morally.

The plenipotentiary in Norway, Kollontai, invites Furuboten, Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Norwegian Communist Party, to the embassy, and I explain to him how and why Moscow decided to make a revolution in the policy of the Sportintern. Kollontaisha adds to Furuboten what position I hold in the Central Committee of the party, and this immediately removes all possible objections.

In northern countries, sport plays an incomparably greater role than in our country. Newspapers print in abundance photos of our team and mine - the captain. We are all together, we met at the rink and are talking (mainly with gestures) with the young world champion in figure skating Sonya Enye, a charming fifteen-year-old baby doll, etc.

In the evening I decide to go to the opera, to listen to how the Norwegians put on Carmen. The fact that I don't understand a word of Norwegian doesn't bother me, I know Carmen by heart. During the first intermission, I go out to the foyer for a walk and stop at the column. I'm not exactly dressed for the opera, but the public recognizes me from today's newspaper photographs - "this is the Bolshevik captain of the team." A lovely girl passes by me, accompanied by two very respectful and well-mannered young men; she argues with them about something, they politely disagree. Suddenly it becomes clear what's going on. She walks towards me and starts a conversation with me. She speaks both French and English. We agree in French. First, the conversation is about the team, about the skates. Then the interlocutor begins to ask all sorts of questions, and about the Soviets, and about politics, and about literature. I maneuver (I have to stay abroad) and try to speak ambiguously, make jokes and laugh it off. The interlocutor is very captivated by the conversation, and we continue it in all the following intermissions. I notice that very elderly and respectable people passing by bow to her extremely respectfully. I ask her what she is doing. Works? No, she's with her parents; studies. The evening is very lively. The next day, when I come to the embassy, Kollontaisha declares to me: "It doesn't get easier from hour to hour; now we are already courting royal princesses." I answer, maintaining the party manner:

"And who knows her that she is a royal princess; it's not written on it."

But there is a report about this, and Stalin will ask me: "Who is this princess that you courted?" There are no consequences, however. I'm back with my team

through Finland. In Helsingfors I hope to catch Alyonka. Alas, she is in Leningrad and asked me to call her as soon as I arrive. I'm calling. She tells me that she could not leave because Yagoda refused to sign her passport. The position is very stupid.

If I stay abroad, for the entirety of the case, she will be considered as my accomplice who unsuccessfully tried to escape with me, and the poor girl will be shot for absolutely nothing, because in fact she has no idea what I want. run abroad. You have to decide instantly. On the contrary, if I return, there will be no unpleasant consequences for her. I write down my unsuccessful attempt to emigrate to my liability, get on the train and return to Soviet Russia. Yagoda had already managed to present to Stalin a letter about my intention to emigrate, and even with the woman I loved. Stalin, as always, indifferently will hand over the denunciation to me. I shrug my shoulders: "This is becoming a mania for him." In any case, my return leaves Yagoda in the cold. It has been proven that I did not want to run away - otherwise why would I have returned. Human possible motives for such a return are not available to either Stalin or Yagoda - it would not even occur to them. Since it is now completely clear that no matter how I try to escape, I will not be able to take Alyonka

with me, I have no other choice but to part with her so that she does not risk anything. It is very hard and unpleasant, but I have no other choice. Besides, I can't tell her the real reason. But she is a proud and proud girl, and at the first sign of my separation, she accepts our divergence without any explanation. On the other hand, the GPU, which tirelessly attends to my affairs, decides to take advantage of the situation. One of her friends, Zhenya, who works at the GPU (but Alyonka doesn't know this), receives a task, which she does very successfully: "Do you know why he left you? I accidentally found out - he has another lady of the heart; all the same, what a scoundrel, etc." Gradually, Alyonka is being inflated, convinced that I am a hidden counter-revolutionary, and persuaded (as a duty of a communist) to file an application against me at the Central Control Commission, accusing me of hidden anti-Bolshevism. Yagoda is again counting on his Peters and Latsis, who sit on the Party Collegium of the Central Control Commission. But for this it is still necessary to take the preliminary permission of Stalin. It's not so easy to turn to Stalin. But here (it is already the spring of 1926, and Zinoviev, Kamenev and Sokolnikov are in opposition) an accidental circumstance comes. I continue to meet with Sokolnikov. Stalin is not embarrassed by this - I also work in the Narkomfin, and I can still have all sorts of business with him along this line. But Kamenev asks me to come to him. From January 1926, Kamenev was no longer a member of the Politburo, but a candidate. I see no reason not to visit him, although I do not know why he needs me. I'm coming in. Kamenev makes an attempt to recruit me into the opposition. I answer him with very sour remarks about the programmatic differences that he develops: I am not a baby and I see that there is more power struggle than a real difference. But the GPU reports to Stalin that I was at Kamenev's. Then Stalin changes his attitude to the matter and agrees to be summoned to the Central Control Commission and listened to Alyonka's accusations - the woman with whom you were close may know interesting secrets about you. (Of course, according to Soviet-Stalinist practice, one had to go to Stalin and tell him about the conversation with Kamenev, but I am deeply disgusted by this whole spy-informing system, and I don't do it). At the Central Control Commission, Alyonka is essentially talking nonsense. The accusations of my being counter-revolutionary do not go beyond what I used to say: "our usual Soviet lunatic asylum" and "our Soviet mess." I really said this often and without embarrassment. The interlocutors usually smiled respectfully - I belonged to the number of nobles who can afford to criticize the Soviet order, so to speak, criticism of the master. When she finished, I take the floor and ask the party collegium not to judge her severely - she is a devoted member of the party, she says what she really thinks, she believes that she is doing her duty as a communist, and does not slander at all in order to harm the person with whom she broke up. It turns out funny. Alyonka, blaming me, is looking for my expulsion from the party, which for me is tantamount to execution. Meanwhile, without defending myself, I defend my accuser. Yaroslavsky, who is chairing, asks what I will say on the merits of her accusations. I just wave my hand: "Nothing." The Party Collegium pretends to delay a severe reproach against me that I arranged for her a business trip abroad. I do not pay any attention to this - I know that all this is a theater and that they will ask Stalin,

decide something. Therefore, the next day, I go to Stalin, talking, among other things, about the Central Control Commission as if all this is nonsense (the initiative of an offended woman), and then, by the way, I also report that Comrade Kamenev tried to bring me into the opposition faith, but to no avail. Stalin calms down and, obviously, to the question of Yaroslavsky what to decide on the Central Control Commission, he replies that I should be left alone, because there are no more consequences. for me it doesn't.

However, this is not entirely true. Of all these stories, something remains. I have long been surprised how Stalin, with his painful suspicion, digests all this. In the spring of 1926, I try to arrange for myself another trip abroad, so that this time I can stay there. As for Alyonka, I am now completely calm. After all the accusations against me, she now risks nothing. If the GPU tries to reproach her for anything, she will say: "I told you that he was a counter-revolutionary, but the Central Control Commission did not believe me. Now you see who is right." And there really is nothing to say. I am writing a paper on the foundations of the theory of conjuncture. There is no such work in the world economic literature. I pretend that I really need the materials

of the Kiel Institute of World Economy in Germany (they are actually very valuable) and I arrange a business trip from Narkomfin for a few days to Germany. But here I have two options: either to make the trip through the decision of the Orgburo of the Central Committee, which is too pompous for such a small matter and hardly profitable, or simply to go to Stalin and ask if he has any objections. I go to Stalin and say that I want to go to Germany for a few days for materials. I ask for his consent. The answer is unexpected and meaningful: "What are you, comrade Bazhanov, everything is abroad and abroad. Stay at home for a while."

This means that now I will not go abroad in the normal way. In the end, Stalin had something left from all the attacks of the GPU against me. "But what if, in fact, Bazhanov remains abroad; he's stuffed with state secrets like dynamite. It's better not to risk it, let him sit at home."

About three months later, I do another indirect check, but arrange it in such a way that I have nothing to do with it. At the collegium of the Narkomfin, we are talking about Professor Lyubimov, the financial agent of the Soviets in France. He is non-party, there is no trust in him, it is suspected that, along with Soviet financial affairs, he skillfully arranges his own. Who would replace him? One of the members of the Board says: "Perhaps Comrade Bazhanov would go there to put things in order in this matter." I pretend not to be fascinated by this and say, "If it's not for long, maybe." People's Commissar Bryukhanov supports this proposal. He coordinates this with the Central Committee. Judging by the fact that this has no consequences, I conclude that he tried to talk to Molotov (hardly Stalin) and received the same answer: "Let him sit at home."

Now the possibility of a normal trip abroad for me completely disappear. But I feel completely like an internal emigrant and decide to escape in any way.

First of all, it is necessary that they forget about me a little, not to annoy the eyes of Stalin and Molotov. I left the Central Committee gradually and imperceptibly, dodging all work there, now I need to work for some time in the Narkomfin, so that everyone gets used to the fact that I work there quietly and peacefully, that way for a year. In the meantime, organize your escape.

My Alyonka gradually consoled herself and returned to her Carrant. By age, Smorodin is no longer in the Komsomol and is trying to study. Despite all his efforts, he does not succeed, his head is not arranged for the sciences, and he goes over to party work. Here, obviously, the head is not so needed, and he reaches the rank of secretary of the Leningrad Party Committee and candidate member of the Central Committee. But in the Stalinist meat grinder of 1937 he is shot. Poor Alenka gets into the meat grinder with him and ends her young life in the basement of the GPU. Their daughter May is still a girl, it's too early to shoot her, but when she grows up after the war (I think in 1949), she is sent to a concentration camp (from there she will still come out alive).

Chapter 15

LARIONOV. TO CENTRAL ASIA. MOSCOW - FAREWELL. BLYUMKIN AND MAXIMOV. ASHGABAT. SECRET DEPARTMENT OF THE CC OF TURKMENISTAN

Having left the Central Committee, I have much more time. At Narkomfin, I also take over the editing of *Finansovaya Gazeta*. This is the daily newspaper of the finance department, which deals specifically with financial and economic issues. I am very interested in newspaper technology, and by the way, typographic. Here you can learn a lot. The very management of the newspaper does not present any difficulties for me - I know the financial policy of the authorities perfectly; By the way, the replacement of Sokolnikov by Bryukhanov does not change anything in it.

In addition, I take over the management of the Financial Publishing House. It publishes financial and economic literature. It employs 184 people. At the very first meeting of the board of the publishing house, where all the leading employees are present - the head of the operational department, and the budget, and publishing, and editorial, and God knows what else, and the secretary of the cell, and the chairman of the local committee, etc., etc. , I'm trying to figure out what the Publisher does and how. All the people in charge to my business questions are tedious nonsense about vigilance, the party line, and when I insist on facts and figures, no one knows anything, and in the end the questioner turns to a very old man, modestly sitting at the very end of the table around the corner: "Comrade Matveev, please give me the numbers." Comrade Matveev immediately gives the necessary figures. An hour later, I am convinced that this is a bunch of parasites who do nothing, know nothing, and whose main occupation is denunciations, intrigues and intrigue "along the party line." I disperse them and adjourn the meeting. I only ask Comrade Matveev to stay, from whom I want to get some figures. Comrade Matveev - non-partisan, special. Keeps below the grass. The only person in the publishing house who knows everything perfectly and is well versed in all the work. He is a technical consultant. In half an hour I have a clear and precise picture of the whole state of affairs in the publishing house. I am surprised at Comrade Matveev's amazing knowledge and deep understanding of the matter. "And what did you do before the revolution?" Shivering and embarrassed, Comrade Matveev confesses that he was a bourgeois and a publisher and published just the same financial and economic literature, being practically a monopolist in Russia in this matter. It turns out that its publishing volume was approximately the same as that of our Financial Publishing House now. I'm wondering how big the staffs of his publishing house were. Just as embarrassed, he explains that there were no states. Who was? Yes, he is a publisher, and one employee, she is also a secretary and a typist. And it's all. What room did you occupy? Again, there was no room. There was a room in which a publisher worked behind a desk and a typist at a table. And they did the same work that now 184 parasites occupying a huge house. For me, this is a symbol, a picture of the entire Soviet system. I am finishing my work on the theory of economic conjuncture. I am trying to establish the basic bases of the theory. Bronsky persuades me to publish this work in his thick journal *Socialist Economy*. The People's Commissariat of Enlightenment informs me that it counts this work as a doctoral dissertation, and the Plekhanov Moscow Institute of National Economy, which is opening a department of the theory of economic conditions, invites me as a professor in this department. Alas, I do not occupy this chair for long - in the spring of 1927; after that I will leave Moscow on the road to the free world through Central Asia. I am leaving the Financial and Economic Bureau because I am afraid that the People's Commissariat may detain me because of this work when I want to leave. But I invent a job for myself, where I will be my own master and which I can leave when I want. It happens like this.

The People's Commissariat of Finance needs tens of thousands of employees with higher specialized education for the positions of financial inspectors, controllers, banking specialists, etc. The cadres who held these positions before the revolution, usually people with higher education, fled, were dispersed, shot, went into exile . There is a huge disadvantage in these workers. Meanwhile, the new ("class") policy pursued in higher education admits to higher educational institutions only persons of proletarian origin, the vast majority of those with little culture, and no higher education.

prepared, because they do not even have a secondary. On the contrary, young people who are more cultured and have a secondary education are of non-proletarian origin, and are not admitted to higher education. How to be? Narkomfin is trying to organize retraining courses in Leningrad (raising the cultural level and qualifications) of those weak financial workers who occupy these places. The courses functioned for a year, ate a huge amount of money (it is necessary to feed and support cadets, teachers, service personnel, and all this in Soviet conditions gives an ever-growing mountain with local committees, clubs, cells, political education, economic services, housing, maintenance, repairs, etc.). and released a hundred dubious "retrained" ones. People's Commissar Bryukhanov asks me to go to Leningrad, look at the issue and give an opinion on what it gave. I do it and I am convinced that a huge amount of money is wasted. In addition, this is a drop in the ocean compared to the department's needs for specialists.

But I see a solution. I say to Bryukhanov: "Nikolai Pavlovich, lend me ten thousand rubles from the People's Commissariat. I will arrange the Faculty of Finance at home - correspondence education. This will work on business accounting; In three or four months I will return your ten thousand to you. I will prepare thousands of financial workers you need, and it will not cost you a penny. But only here there will be no proletarian origin. I will just give an opportunity, with the help of correspondence education, to obtain qualifications for those young people to whom all roads are closed because of their social origin. And it doesn't matter to you what origin your financial specialists will be - it is important for you to have them." Bryukhanov is an intelligent man and immediately agrees; I'm being loaned the ten thousand I need.

I am now organizing the Central Correspondence Courses in Finance and Economics (Finance Faculty at Home). But in Russia, correspondence education, unlike abroad, is almost unknown. In 1912-1913 there were some general education correspondence courses in Rostov-on-Don, but they stopped during the war. And nothing more. I'm starting

by writing a little book on distance education, about a hundred pages long. Now I am publishing it in the Financial Publishing House. It costs 80 cents. She has amazing success. In three months, 100,000 copies are sold. It also prepares the success of my Faculty of Finance.

I have a tiny staff - my deputy professor Sindeev and the manager of affairs - the former staff captain Budavey. Both non-partisan and businesslike. But I invite all the best financial specialists in the country - 49 best professors - fortunately I know them well from their work in my Financial and Economic Bureau at Narkomfin. The courses are divided into four departments, which I entrust to the best specialists to develop the curriculum. The invited professors will write their courses, which will be printed and distributed to the Students. Students will receive their written work. Professors will correct them and return them to students with their comments. The duration of the study is two to three years (depending on the department). The teaching will end with an examination session. Those who pass the exams will receive diplomas giving the right to work in the Narkomfin bodies as financial and banking inspectors, controllers, etc. Students pay three rubles a month (for everything - both lectures and professorial work).

As soon as courses open and recruitment is announced, seven thousand students enter in the first month. I accept everyone. Of the twenty-one thousand rubles received, I immediately return to Bryukhanov his ten thousand. I pay professors very generously - they are extremely satisfied and take up their work with pleasure; by the way, all these people are knowledgeable - there is not a single communist among them. The People's Commissar is also extremely pleased: his problem of personnel

will finally be resolved. At this moment, the GPU arrests my head of the credit department of courses, Chalkushyan. This is the largest credit specialist, consultant of the State Bank. In need of money, he had the imprudence to sell some of his old paintings to a Japanese diplomat, not realizing what a mortal danger this represented in Soviet conditions. A poor little tearful woman comes to me, all in black, his wife. She asks me to do what I can. What can I do? Considering my

relations with the GPU and the fact that I am no longer in the Central Committee, my intercession can only harm him. I'm taking a big risk by telling her frankly; she does not understand; she heard that I was a very big party nobleman. I tell her that I can't explain anything to her, but in a few months she will understand everything herself (in a few months I will run away abroad). I pick up the telephone receiver, give her a hearing aid so that she can hear the conversation, and call Prokofiev, head of the Economic Department of the GPU. I speak in such a way that this is not intercession - it would only hurt poor Chalkushyan.

"Comrade Prokofiev, you have arrested my head of the credit department of courses, Chalkushyan. What's the matter?" "What's the matter, comrade Bazhanov, I can't tell you - this is the secret of the GPU investigation." "But Chalkushyan is now doing urgent work for the courses - developing a curriculum for the credit department. Anyway, I need to know if this is a serious matter or not. Have you arrested him for some trifling matter, just for the sake of warning, and then I can wait a bit if you release him soon. Or this is a serious matter, and I have to replace it with someone else. Prokofiev advises me to replace him - a very serious matter.

Chalkushyan did not get out of prison: the GPU "sewn" him with a connection with the Japanese and economic espionage in their favor.

They shot him. The courses are going very well. I deal with them until the summer of 1927. Since I have my own hand here, Vladyka, when I am about to leave Moscow, I put my German Sverdlov in my place as director. Already in Paris, two years later, I have the pleasure of reading in Izvestia an announcement about a new annual enrollment for my courses and a signature: director German Sverdlov. So they continue.

In the summer of 1927 I rest in the Crimea. Before my departure, I receive from the Central Committee a warning from the GPU to all responsible officials to be careful: a dangerous terrorist is roaming Moscow. I leave for the Crimea and find out that a terrorist has thrown a bomb at a meeting in the Leningrad Party Club; dozens of dead and wounded. I would later meet this terrorist in Paris and Berlin. This is a charming and pure young man, Larionov.

At this time (1927), the head of the All-Military Union, Kutepov, was fighting against the Bolsheviks. A number of sacrificial boys and girls are sent to Russia to throw bombs, following the example of the old Russian revolutionaries. But they do not know the strength of the new giant police apparatus in Russia. They are allegedly helped by a large and strong anti-Bolshevik organization - "Trust". In fact, this "Trust" is organized by the GPU itself. All his appearances, apartments, employees are all Chekists. Terrorists cross the Soviet border, fall directly into the clutches of the GPU, and they are shot. Furthermore. The premises of the General Military Union in

Paris, in which General Kutepov conducts his anti-Bolshevik work, is located in a house owned by a Russian capitalist, chairman of the Russian Trade and Industrial Union (an association of large merchants and manufacturers) Tretyakov. And no one knows that Tretyakov is an agent of the GPU, that he installed a microphone in the wall of Kutepov's office, and everything that is done at Kutepov's is now known to the GPU for sure. All the details about the terrorists who will go to Russia, the GPU knows long before they

trips.

(Tretyakov will continue to work for the GPU until 1941; he will betray Kutepov, who was kidnapped by the Bolsheviks; with his help, the KGB agent General Skoblin organizes the kidnapping of General Miller, Kutepov's successor. By chance, in 1941, German troops captured Minsk with such speed that the GPU did not have time neither destroy nor take out his archives; while sorting through these archives, the Russian translator found a reference to Moscow "as our agent Tretyakov told us from Paris ..." The Germans shot him. The motives for which he worked for almost twenty years at the GPU remained unclear).

Upon returning from the Crimea, the last stage of preparation for my escape begins.

Now I can't leave peacefully, on a business trip, abroad. I can only run across some border. Through what? Their study leads to rather bleak conclusions. The Polish border is completely closed. Rows of barbed wires, border guards with dogs everywhere, here the GPU did its best to make the border impenetrable. It is also impossible to flee to Romania: the border is the Dniester, under close surveillance around the clock.

It is much more difficult to protect the Finnish border, it stretches through forests and tundra. But it is impossible to approach it - what excuse can I have to come to this border? Already my presence in the border zone will be proof enough that I want to leave the socialist paradise. But, studying the map, I stop at Turkmenistan. Its populated strip

stretches in a narrow ribbon between the sandy desert and Persia. And the capital - Ashgabat - is only twenty kilometers from the border. It cannot be that there was no way to legally approach the border (I still do not suspect that the difficulties of escaping to Persia lie in a completely different way, which will be discussed further). I decide to flee to Persia from Turkmenistan. But first you need to get to Turkmenistan, which is subordinate to the Central Asian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party.

I easily get rid of the Faculty of Finance - I am the boss here - and hand it over to German Sverdlov. Then I

make an excursion to the Orgraspred of the Central Committee, offering to send me at the disposal of the Central Asian Bureau of the Central Committee. Although I know everyone and everything in the Central Committee, all the entrances and exits, I run into a major difficulty: according to the nomenclature of responsible workers, I belong to such a high category that the Organizing Committee does not have the right to dispose of me: for this, at least the decision of the Organizing Bureau is needed. I am kindly offered to submit the resolution on my parcel for approval by the Organizing Bureau. It doesn't suit me. I explain that I don't want to risk at all that one of the members of the Orgburo will seize me in order to assign me to some responsible job, which is exactly what I need and where, in the opinion of the Orgburo, I will fit perfectly. I advise you to do this: call Molotov and ask if he has any objections to my work in Central Asia. If not, the Orgspred can send me in this way with the consent of the secretary of the Central Committee and the chairman of the Orgburo, and if there is, I will go to Molotov myself to settle it. That is how it is done. Fortunately, Molotov was already fed up with the fact that I was resisting and did not want to work in the Central Committee, and he replied: "Well, if he really wants to, let him go." And I get a ticket "at the

disposal of the Central Asian Bureau of the Central Committee for responsible work." With this ticket, I come to Tashkent and go to the Secretary of the Central Asian Bureau of the Central Committee Zelensky. This is the same Zelensky who was the first secretary of the Moscow Committee and missed the opposition in the fall of 1923. Then the troika decided that he was too weak for the Moscow organization, the most important in the country, and sent him to host in Central Asia.

Zelensky is surprised by my arrival (and somewhat concerned: what is it? Stalin's eye?) I explain to him that I quit my central job because I felt completely out of touch with life, and decided to go to a grassroots job. "That's great," Zelensky says. - We will appoint you my assistant and head of the Secret Department of the Central Committee SredAzBuro; you organize it for us - I heard about your organization of the Politburo apparatus "(that is, he wants me to set up his office for him and be his secretary). I told him: "Comrade Zelensky, let's be frank: I didn't leave the job of Stalin's assistant and Politburo secretary to be your secretary. I want a completely grassroots job, away to remote places. Here in Turkmenistan, the secretary of the Central Committee, Ibragimov; I know him from the apparatus of the Central Committee - send me to his disposal. Zelensky quickly agrees, and I get a new ticket - "at the disposal of the Central Committee of Turkmenistan."

From Tashkent, I do not go to Ashgabat, but return to Moscow to say goodbye to friends and Moscow - will I ever return to my homeland?

I need to do more than just say goodbye to my friends. We need to think about how to make sure that for them the risk of my escape was the least. After my flight, the GPU will rush to find out if I belonged to any anti-communist organization and who is connected with me. The risk for friends is very great. But I have two kinds of friends: the ones I see often, and quite openly, and flaunting a good relationship. This is German Sverdlov, Munka Zorky, two or three more. They do not have the slightest idea that I am an enemy of communism, and the GPU will perfectly understand that if I were somehow politically connected with them in some other way, if I had common ideas, I would never be openly friendly with them. They don't risk anything. But there are others who have gone through the same evolution as me. Here I have been cautious lately, meeting with them in their offices, as if only on official business. Here the GPU

will rummage.

My friends give me this idea: when you are abroad and write about Moscow and communism, pretend that you did not become an anti-communist in the Politburo, but two years earlier - before you came to work in the Central Committee. This will not change anything in the value of your testimony - it does not matter whether you became an anti-Bolshevik two years earlier or later, what matters is the correctness of what you write. And the GPU and Yagoda will immediately seize on your confession: "Aha, here is our KGB scent, we immediately determined that he was a counter-revolutionary." But then, in search of some organization of yours, they will go on the wrong track. If you were an anti-communist before, then, obviously, having arrived in Moscow and entered the Central Committee, you had to hide your views extremely carefully from everyone, and each of us could be just as misled about you as the Politburo; and you need to look for your connections and your organization earlier, before Moscow, that is, in your hometown.

Of course, the idea is not bad. The GPU will not find anything in Mogilev, no matter how much they search: there was no organization there. But it can take my friends from the last grades of the gymnasium for her: Mitka Anichkov went to the White Army; Julius Sirbul, a Moldovan from the other side of the Dniester, is now in Bessarabia, that is, in Romania, and is known as an ardent anti-communist. They risk nothing, and the search for the GPU will follow a false trail. I agree and make such a promise (I will have to fulfill it, but then I will be very sorry that I made it - I will talk about this later).

Here I must digress and introduce readers to Comrade Blumkin, the same Blumkin who, during the uprising of the Left Social Revolutionaries in 1918, killed the German ambassador in Moscow, Count Mirbach, in order to disrupt the peace of Brest-Litovsk.

Back in 1925, I often met with Munkka Zorkiy. It was his Komsomol nickname; real name Emmanuil Lifshits. He was in charge of the Press Department of the Komsomol Central Committee. He was a smart, funny and witty boy. He had one weakness - he was terribly afraid of dogs. When we walked with him down the street, and a harmless dog was walking towards me, Munka took my elbow and said: "Listen, Bazhanov, let's better go to the other side of the street; You know I'm Jewish and I don't like being bitten by dogs." We walked with him along

the Arbat. We caught up with an old luxurious bourgeois house. "Here," says Munka, "I will leave you. In this house, the third floor is an apartment reserved for the GPU, and Yakov Blyumkin lives in it, whom you, of course, have heard of. I called him and he is waiting for me. But, you know, Bazhanov, let's go together. You will not regret. Blumkin is a rare fool, special, pure. When we arrive, he, waiting for me, will be sitting in a red silk robe, smoking an oriental pipe a yard long, and a volume of Lenin's works will be opened in front of him (by the way, I purposely looked: it is always opened on the same page). Let's go, let's go." I went. Everything was as Zorky foresaw - both the dressing gown, and the pipe, and Lenin's volume. Blumkin was a swaggering and self-satisfied creature. He was convinced that he was a historical figure. Zorky and I made fun of his swagger: "Yakov Grigoryevich, we were in the Museum of the History of the Revolution; There's a whole wall dedicated to you and Mirbach's murder." "Oh, very nice. And what's on the wall? - "Yes, all sorts of newspaper clippings, photographs, documents, quotes; and at the top, across the wall, a quote from Lenin: "We need not the hysterical antics of petty-bourgeois degenerates, but the powerful march of the iron battalions of the proletariat." Of course we made it up; Blumkin was very upset, but he did not go to the museum of the revolution to check our invention. Blumkin's cousin told me about the

murder of Mirbach that the case was not exactly as Blumkin describes: when Blumkin and those accompanying him were in Mirbach's office, Blumkin threw a bomb and with extreme haste threw himself out the window, and hung with his pants on the iron fence in a very uncomfortable positions. The sailor accompanying him slowly slapped Mirbach, removed Blumkin from the bars, loaded him into a truck and took him away. The sailor very soon died somewhere on the fronts of the civil war, and Blumkin was outlawed by the Bolsheviks. But very soon he went over to the side of the Bolsheviks, betraying the organization of the Left SRs, was accepted into the party and into the Cheka, and became famous for his participation in the brutal suppression of the Georgian uprising. Further, his Chekist career led him to Mongolia, where, at the head of the Cheka, he abused executions so much that even the GPU found it necessary

revoke him. The silk robe and pipe were from there - a memory of Mongolia. The GPU did not know where to put him, and he was in the reserve.

When he showed me his apartment of four huge rooms, I said: "And you live here alone?" - "No, my cousin Maximov lives with me - he takes care of my household." Maximov was introduced to me. He was from Odessa, like Blumkin. Maksimov - was his party nickname, which he essentially had no right to use, since in Odessa he was a member of the Party and was in charge of the economy of a cavalry regiment, but he stole, selling state-owned oats in his favor, and was expelled from the party and expelled from the army. His real name was Birger. He lived with his cousin, and Blumkin tried to get him a job, but it was not easy: no one was eager to accept a person expelled from the party for stealing government property. "And you have two rooms completely empty; and German Sverdlov, the brother of the late Yakov, who lives in a cramped apartment with his brother Veniamin in the

house of the Supreme Council of National Economy, does not even have his own room. Settle him here with you.

- "Brother of Yakov Sverdlov? Yes, I'll be happy. Let him move even today." So German Sverdlov settled with Blumkin. The very first time

Blumkin went to the GPU, he boasted of his acquaintance with me. Yagoda rose up: "Yakov Grigorievich, here is a job for you. Bazhanov hates the GPU, we suspect that he is not ours, bring him to clean water. This is a mission of the utmost importance." Blumkin undertook this, but two or three months later he told Yagoda that he had no opportunity to meet with me more often and get to know me better and asked him to be released from this work. But he gave another idea: his cousin, living in his apartment with German Sverdlov and seeing him all the time, can learn everything about Bazhanov from Sverdlov - Sverdlov and Bazhanov see each other all the time. The idea was approved, Maximov was called to the head of the Administrative Department of the GPU, Flexer, and finally found the right job: to spy on me and submit reports to the GPU. What he fed until the summer of 1927. Still not knowing what to do with Blumkin, the GPU tried to assign him to Trotsky. Trotsky in 1925 toured factories with a commission to examine the quality of products. Blumkin was put into this commission.

No matter how naive Trotsky was, Blumkin's functions in the commission were completely clear to him. The very first time that a subcommittee headed by Blumkin examined some plant and Blumkin wanted to make a report at a meeting of the commission chaired by Trotsky, Trotsky interrupted him: "Comrade Blumkin was there the eye of the party along the line of vigilance; We have no doubt that he did his job. We will listen to the reports of the experts who were on the subcommittee." Blumkin pouted like a turkey: "Firstly, not Blumkin, but Blumkin; you should know the history of the party better, comrade Trotsky; secondly..." Trotsky slammed his fist on the table: "I didn't give you a word!" Blumkin emerged from the commission as an ardent enemy of Trotsky. In order to use his hatred for the opposition, the GPU also tried to assign him to Kamenev - already in 1926, when Kamenev was appointed People's Commissariat of Trade, Blumkin was appointed a consultant to the People's Commissariat of Trade; Kamenev's secretaries were having fun until they dropped about the work of the "consultant". Kamenev's secretaries showed me Blumkin's solemn appeal to Kamenev. It began like this: "Comrade Kamenev! I ask you: where am I, what am I and who am I? I had to withdraw it from there.

But Blumkin nevertheless found his real vocation when he was sent as a resident of the GPU (espionage and sabotage) in the countries of the Middle East. We will meet with him again.

When I said goodbye to Moscow in the autumn of 1927, Maksimov was very sad. With my departure, he was losing an easy and well-paid job. I decided to be embarrassed. I knew that he was submitting reports about me to the GPU, but he did not know that I knew this. Taught by a variety of Soviet experience, I believed that if the enemy wants to have information about you, then it is most convenient if you supply it yourself - you choose what you need. So I did. I spoke about myself to the unsuspecting German Sverdlov exactly what could be transferred to the GPU without any harm to me, and it went there through Maximov. Having met Maksimov at German's before leaving for Ashgabat, I

asked him: "How are you doing with work?" "Yeah, it's still bad." "Do you want me to take you with me to Central Asia?" ABOUT

yes, he would be happy to, let me know, tomorrow he will give me the final answer - we need to interrupt some ongoing negotiations. I understand very well that he will run to the GPU to ask what to do. They tell him - excellent, of course, go, continue to give reports. And I came to Ashgabat with Maximov.

In Ashgabat, I came to the first secretary of the Central Committee of Turkmenistan, Ibragimov. I knew him from the Central Committee. When I was secretary of the Politburo, he was a responsible instructor of the Central Committee and regarded me as a big boss. Moreover, he was surprised by my arrival. The first idea - I came to his place. I dissuaded him, explained that I wanted a small grassroots job. "Here, appoint me to start with the head of the secret department of the Central Committee (this is what I refused from Zelensky). I will be your subordinate and it will be clear that I have no claims to your place. This is what was done.

A few days later I declared that I was a passionate hunter, but for big game (I must say that I hate hunting). I called Dorofeev, the head of the 46th Border Detachment of the GPU troops, who was guarding the border there, and told him to send me two carbines and passes for the right to hunt in the border strip for me and Maximov. Which is what I got right now. For two or three months I studied the situation,

and Maximov, whom I placed on small housekeeping work, regularly sent reports about me to Moscow.

Ibragimov was a good man, and I established excellent relations with him. I was in charge of the secret office of the Central Committee, secretary at the meetings of the bureau and plenums of the Turkmen Central Committee of the party and was again, albeit on a small local scale, at the center of all secrets. Often, when talking with Ibragimov, I asked him about Persia. It confuses me that the railway - our main connection with the country - runs all the time along the Persian border itself. In the event of war, the Persians would have no trouble cutting our main line of communication. Ibragimov laughs. And what about our 46th border detachment? I object - I'm talking about the army. Ibragimov says: "Do you remember the story? When a century ago there was a rebellion in Tehran and our Russian ambassador Griboyedov was killed, what did the tsar do? He sent a hundred Cossacks from Russia, and she put things in order in Persia; don't think now

much differently."

Another time I say: here you have the border very close; Probably, cases of flight across the border are frequent. On the contrary, Ibragimov says, they are extremely rare. Of course, the border is very large, and it would be very difficult to guard the border line. But in order to get closer to the border, you need to get to some populated place, namely, they are constantly monitored. No new person can go unnoticed. Okay, I say, but that doesn't apply to party members. A

responsible worker can easily approach the border and cross it. Have you had such cases? Two, says Ibragimov, they present no difficulty. We seize a responsible party member who fled to Persia right in Persia and take him back. "And the Persian authorities?" "And the Persian authorities close their eyes as if nothing happened." This looks pretty disappointing. So it's easy to cross the border here. Difficulties

start further. Well, let's take risks.

I'm doing border reconnaissance. 20-30 kilometers from Ashgabat, on the very border with Persia and already in the mountains, there is Firyuza, the rest house of the Central Committee. We, several employees of the Central Committee, hunters, are making a hunting excursion there on Sunday. I go very far along the mountain gorge - who knows, maybe I'm already in Persia. I am convinced that the place for crossing the border is completely unsuitable: you will cross, and from somewhere in the gorge a border outpost hidden there will appear, which will say: "Comrade, this is already Persia, what are you doing here? Turn

back!" I choose Lutfabad on the map, forty to fifty kilometers from Ashgabat; this is a railway station, directly opposite it, two kilometers across an open field, is a Persian village of the same name. I decide to cross the border on January 1 (1928). If I am alive now and writing these lines, I owe this to the decision to cross the border precisely on January 1st.

Chapter 16 Persia. India.

*BORDER CROSSING. PERSIA. FIRST ATTEMPT. MOSCOW DEMANDS EXTRACT.
CHEKA AT WORK - AGABEKOV. KHOSHTARIYA AND TEYMURTASH. THROUGH PERSIA.
DUZDAB. INDIA. MACDONALD AND LENA GOLDFIELDS. I'M GOING TO FRANCE*

On the evening of December 31, Maximov and I go hunting. Maximov, in fact, would prefer to stay and celebrate the New Year in some cheerful company, but he is afraid that his superiors (GPU) will be very unhappy that he does not follow me on the heels. We arrive by rail at Lutfabad station and immediately report to the head of the border outpost. I show documents, passes to the right of hunting in the border strip. The head of the outpost invites me to take part in their friendly meeting of the New Year. This is a courtesy invitation. I answer that, firstly, I came to hunt, I prefer to get enough sleep and go hunting fresh in the early morning; secondly, they, of course, want to drink in a friendly circle; I don't drink anything and I don't fit at all for drinking companies. We go to sleep.

The next day, January 1, early in the morning, we leave and go straight to the Persian village. After one kilometer in an open field and right in front of the border outpost, I see a dilapidated post: this is a border post, further - Persia. The border outpost does not show any signs of life - it is all dead drunk. My Maximov does not understand the topography of places at all and does not suspect that we have one foot in Persia. We sit down and have breakfast.

After breakfast, I get up; we have a carbine each, but I still have all the cartridges. I say: "Arkady Romanovich, this is a border post and this is Persia. You - as you wish, and I - to Persia, and forever leave the socialist paradise - let the bright construction of communism continue without me. Maximov is lost: "I can't go back - they'll shoot me for letting you go." I suggest; "If you want, I will take you and take you to Europe, but I warn you that from now on you will be the same hunt as me." Maximov believes that he has no other choice - he is with me to Persia. We come to the village and try to find the local authorities.

Finally we succeed. The authorities declare that the case far exceeds their competence and send a messenger to the administrative center, which is twenty kilometers away. The messenger returns late in the evening - we must go to this center. But the local authorities resolutely refuse to organize our trip at night, and we have to spend the night in Lutfabad.

In the meantime, informants from the Soviets are crossing the border and trying to notify the frontier outpost of our flight across the border. But the entire outpost is absolutely drunk and it is not possible to notify anyone until the morning of January 2. And on the morning of January 2, we already left for the center of the district and soon arrived there. There is no doubt that if it had not been January 1 and the New Year's Eve, on the very first night a Soviet armed detachment would have crossed the border, seized us and brought us back. That would be the end of my career.

In the center of the district, a new extraordinary chance awaits me. This is the district chief, Pasban. Unlike the rest of the local Persian administration, cowardly, lazy, corrupt and indifferent to everything, this is a smart, strong-willed and decisive person. It turns out that he went through a German school during the World War. He should send

us to the capital of the province (Khorasan) - to Meshed. He explains to me that between us and Meschedom there are mountains 3000 meters high. There is only one wheeled road; it goes around the mountains, approaching Ashgabat, and against Ashgabat passes through the mountains along a deep gorge and a pass through the city of Kuchan, and then goes to the left towards Meshed. To send you on a wheeled road to Meshed means to send you to certain death: from today a detachment of Chekists will be on duty with a car that will seize you and take you to Soviet Russia. Your only chance is to go straight through the mountains. There is no road anywhere. There are paths along which residents sometimes go through the mountains in summer. It's winter now, everything is covered with deep snow. But you must try. The Bolsheviks will not dare to go to the mountains. I will give you guides and mountain horses. Have no confidence in guides; have complete and unlimited trust in mountain horses - they will find their way.

The caravan is being equipped, we are starting to climb the mountains.

Wandering through mountains, snow, landslides, dips and steeps lasts four days. Twenty times we owe our lives to small intelligent shaggy mountain horses that climb like cats over incredible cliffs, suddenly slide along the edge of a steep and immediately fall on their stomach, all four paws apart in all directions, and thus keep from falling down a steep slope. Completely exhausted, we finally descend on the fifth day into the valley of Mesheda and already in its outskirts we go out onto the highway. A truck circulates here as a bus. We get into it on time, take the back seats, and immediately two Chekists get on the bus behind us, but they are forced to take seats in front of us. They probably think that we are armed and do not allow ourselves anything. We reach Meshed, and for some reason the bus takes us to the hotel. We are told that this is the only European-style hotel in the city; natives stop in caravanserais. We are very tired and dream of a good bed. Before going to bed in the hotel restaurant we try to drink coffee. When the coffee is served and my companion is ready to drink it, I stop him: coffee gives off a strong smell of bitter almonds - this is the smell of potassium cyanide. We refuse coffee and go up to our room. The director of the hotel, the Armenian Koltukhchev, explains to us that only one room is free, to which he leads us. For some reason, she has neither a lock nor a valve - they are "in repair"; I see free rooms, but Koltukhchev says that they are delayed by clients. We hastily barricade the door to our unlocked room with chairs and enjoy stretching out on real beds.

Our sleep does not last long. We are awakened by a loud knock on the door. "Police". We protest, but we are taken to the central police of the city ("nazmie"), explaining to us that this is for our own good. The chief of police, a hard and dry serviceman, does not speak Russian. He puts us in his office and disappears. His assistant, an extremely handsome Persian, studied in Russia and speaks good Russian. From him we finally find out what's the matter. It turns out that with our arrival in Meshed, an extraordinary turmoil began in all Soviet organizations. Police informants following the advisers saw how the Soviet military agent Pashaev, meeting with the Soviet agent Koltukhchev (the director of our hotel), handed him a revolver and something else (obviously, poison). The police, realizing what was the matter, set up an ambush under our door. At night, Koltukhchev got up with a revolver to kill us (after which they promised to immediately take him to Soviet Russia), but he was arrested at our door, and we were transferred to the police. The next morning, the governor of Khorasan receives me. This is an old, cunning and phlegmatic

Persian. He looks at me curiously, but says little. He does not speak Russian, and we communicate through an interpreter. I say to the interpreter: "Please tell the Governor that Persia, like any civilized country, of course, grants the right of asylum to political emigrants ..." Instead of translating, the interpreter asks me: "Who told you that Persia is a civilized country ? I say: "Who said it doesn't matter, but you translate as I say." He scratches behind his ear: "The fact is that the governor may think that you are mocking him." - "But you still translate, how

I said".

The governor, after listening to me, answers me that he cannot decide the question about me, that this question should be decided by the government, that he will send a detailed report to the government, but for now all measures will be taken for my safety, and that I have to wait for an answer from Tehran. We finally

settled in the office of the chief of police. The police force looks like a medieval square fortress with only one entrance. The assistant chief of police points me to a tribe of wild Kurdish horsemen encamped in the square in front of the police. This tribe was hired by the Bolsheviks; his task is to fly in, hack and ride away when I leave the police. But the police are well aware of this; and in general I almost never leave the police, and if I do, then under strong guard.

Negotiations with Tehran are dragging on. My assistant chief of police keeps me informed. In fact, the negotiations between Tehran and Moscow, which demands my extradition, are dragging on. In recent years, there have always been

three or four contentious issues between Persia and the USSR, according to

to which neither side yielded, insisting on its right. These were questions about fisheries in the border zone on the Caspian Sea (lots of caviar), about oil fields, and in particular about the border line, which determined who owns the very oil-rich border region. In return for my extradition, Stalin agrees to give in to the Persians on all these controversial issues, and it seems that the Persian government is inclined to extradite me. My dear Persian informs me of this with deep regret. At the same time, in parallel with the negotiations of the government, the GPU's

own work is going on. On January 2, the outpost, which finally woke up, reported to Ashgabat about my flight. Earned a telephone with Moscow, Yagoda, apparently showed extraordinary energy, Stalin ordered me to be killed or delivered to Russia at all costs. A detachment was sent to Persia, which was waiting for me on the road to Kuchan, but did not wait. The resident of the GPU in Persia, Agabekov, arrives on an airplane from Tehran to Meshed, and large sums of money are immediately transferred to him to organize my assassination. Agabekov vigorously gets to work. Preparations are going along different lines, and successfully (Agabekov himself will tell about all this in his book in 1931). And when everything is ready, suddenly Agabekov receives an order from Moscow to stop everything. Agabekov does not understand why, when everything is prepared. He is very discouraged. He does not know that Moscow has received assurances of my extradition through a line he has no idea about. The further history

of Agabekov is interesting. In 1930, he was transferred as a GPU resident to Turkey, to replace Blumkin. At this time, he strongly suspects that if he is recalled to Moscow, then this is in order to shoot him. In addition, he is experiencing the novel of his life: he fell in love with a young, purest Englishwoman, to whom he admits that he is a Chekist and a Soviet spy. The Englishwoman is horrified and returns from Turkey to England. Agabekov leaves his Chekist post and follows her with forged documents. Her parents report all this to the authorities, and Agabekov has to leave for France. Here it becomes obvious that he broke with the Soviets. At the request of the Soviets, he is expelled from France (there is a reason - he came to France on false documents), and in the end Belgium gives him asylum. He writes the book "Cheka at work", which is published in Russian and French. It has one chapter - ten or fifteen pages - devoted to a detailed story of how he organized my murder. In 1932 I have the opportunity to meet him in Paris. He has the appearance and psychology of a typical Chekist.

He lives in Belgium, and the head of the Belgian police, Baron Fergulst, tells me how Agabekov conquered him. The police, of course, refer to him as an expert on Soviet espionage. Somehow, as a result of some cleverly orchestrated incident by the Soviets, the Belgian diplomatic bag falls into the hands of the Soviets for an hour. But the Belgian authorities are calming down - all the envelopes of the diplomatic bag are returned safe and sound, stitched and sealed. "But the GPU still read them," says Agabekov. Fergulst replies that it is impossible. Agabekov suggests: take some document, put it in an envelope, sew it, seal it, give it to me for half an hour. That is how it is done. Agabekov takes the package and leaves. Half an hour later he returns and returns the package to Fergulst safe and sound. But it tells exactly the content of the document.

Agabekov is being hunted properly. In 1937, during the Spanish Civil War, the Bolsheviks find Agabekov's weak point (he remained a Chekist, does not disdain anything and is not averse to making money by selling the Red paintings they stole in Spain from churches or from the bourgeoisie); under this pretext, the Chekists, through nominees, lure him to the Spanish border, let him successfully go through two profitable operations, where he earns a lot of money. All this so that during the third he fell into a trap at the border. He is killed, and his corpse, dragged into the Spanish territory into the mountains, is found only a few months later.

My dear assistant chief of police comes in quite upset. An order was received from Tehran from the government to bring me to Tehran, and according to the information accompanying this order, the move does not bode well for me; my dear Persian thinks that I will be handed over to the Bolsheviks. It's time

for me to go on the attack.

Before the revolution, there was a Russian-Persian bank in Persia. As I was told in Ashgabat, the future shah served in those days in the armed guards of the bank. After the Bolshevik

revolution, the bank died down, but with the NEP, trade with Persia resumed, and all trade went through the bank, which practically monopolized them. The head of the bank was a certain Khoshtaria, who established very good relations with the Soviets. He often came to Moscow and was received by the director of the State Bank, who at that time was Pyatakov. On one of his visits, Khoshtaria says to Pyatakov: "Would your government want one of the most prominent and influential ministers of the Persian government, besides a personal friend of the Shah, to become your agent, of course, for a high bribe?" Pyatakov replied that in principle it was very interesting, but what were the conditions? Khoshtaria named the monetary conditions for such cooperation, but in addition, demanded that, apart from Pyatakov and the Politburo (he apparently was well aware of the true mechanism of Soviet power), this remained unknown to anyone. "Even the GPU?" Pyatakov asked. "Especially the GPU. This is the main condition. If the GPU is aware of the matter, sooner or later some employee of the GPU will run away from you, reveal the secret, and this will cost the head of both the minister and me. Pyatakov promised to report to the Politburo. Which he did. The conditions were accepted, the main requirement was respected - only members of the Politburo knew about this Soviet agent, Pyatakov, through whom

there was a connection, and, of course, I, as secretary of the Politburo. And the Minister of the Court, Teymourtash, a personal friend of the Shah, became an agent of Moscow. He was paid with an extremely clever combination (Pyatakov reported: Khoshtaria is buying a huge estate for a figurehead: at the same time, the buyer allegedly does not have all the necessary funds and hypothesizes the estate in the Russian-Persian Bank for the remainder; then he cannot pay either interest or loans on time. The bank offers Teymourtash to buy the estate only for the price of the hypothec and on credit, but he does not need to pay this small amount either, Khoshtaria sells a small part of the estate, and this covers the debt. It seems that this is how the operation was carried out). And Teymourtash became a rich man. Moscow did not bother him over trifles. He kept Moscow informed only on the most important and basic policy issues of the Persian government. But, apparently, now on the issue of my extradition, he was mobilized and used

his influence to convince the government that it was necessary to seize the opportunity - the price that Moscow offered for me was quite high. After the announcement of my trip to Tehran, I waited a day to wait for Friday - in Persia this day corresponded to our Sunday - institutions are closed, everyone is resting. I called the chief of police. He is not in the city, he is in the country. Then Assistant Chief of Police. He arrived. I told him that I wanted to urgently see the governor of Khorasan. He is also not in the city, he is in the country (this is what I wanted). Since the matter is very important and I urgently need to convey to the authorities a secret of great importance, I ask that the "emilyaksher" (commander of the Khorasan military district) receive me immediately. Emilaksher replied that he was waiting for me. I knew that, being a Persian, he had studied at a Russian military school even before the war, and thus was a Russian officer and spoke Russian well. In addition, he was close to the Shah. I told Emilaksher that I knew (as probably he did) that the government was summoning me to Tehran and seemed inclined to hand me over to the Bolsheviks. I don't think you would sympathize with this operation.

Emilaksher replied that this is a government matter and a political matter, he is also a military man, he is engaged in military affairs and has nothing to do with it.

It has.

I asked if he could do one favor for me. "Is it possible that during the trip I will be accompanied by armed guards that you will give?" Emilyakscher confirmed that I would be accompanied by a non-commissioned officer and four soldiers. "Can you choose all five to be illiterate?" Emilaksher smiled: in Persia, where 80% of the population was illiterate, this is not difficult. This is what he promises me. "Now let's move on to a very important matter on which I wanted to see you. I ask you to immediately go to Tehran, see the Shah personally and personally, in private, tell him that the Minister of the Court, Teymurtash, is a Soviet agent. "It's completely impossible. Teymourtash is the most influential member of the government and a personal friend of the Shah." "Nevertheless, it is true." And I gave him all the evidence. The next day, the emilyaksher flew to Tehran and made a report to the Shah. Shah

made an investigation - verification of my evidence. Checking them fully confirmed. Teymourtash was arrested and brought to a military court on charges of treason. The court sentenced him to death. One of the next days, Maksimov

and I left in a car with a non-commissioned officer and four soldiers. The road went south. At 40 kilometers from Mashed, the road forks - to the right it goes to Tehran, straight south it goes to Duzdab on the Indian border. I ordered to go south. Unther was very surprised. "They told me we were going to Tehran." "They told you this to confuse the Bolsheviks; but we are going to Duzdab." The confused non-commissioned officer did not know what to do. I ask him: "Do you have a forwarding package?" - "Yes". He takes out a package from his bosom, "Look, the package is addressed to the authorities in Duzdab. Read." "Yes, I'm illiterate." - "Well, let one of the soldiers read it." All soldiers are also illiterate. "Well, in a word, I take it on my own responsibility - we are going to Duzdab." For four days, our peppy overloaded

Dodge walked along something that very vaguely resembled roads. As the Persians say: "God lost the road, but the driver found it." We drove along paths, fields, dry riverbeds. But in the end we still reached Duzdab. Soldiers with rifles turned out to be very useful - on the way, some gangs had nothing against robbing travelers in a car, but the sight of soldiers with rifles immediately calmed them down.

The governor of Duzdaba, having received a package, probably addressed to the Tehran (or military) authorities, did not understand anything. I asked him to release the soldiers, who had nothing to do with it, since I gave the order to the guards accompanying me to go to Duzdab. He said that he had to request instructions from Tehran, but for the time being he put at our disposal a small, rather isolated house. Since, according to the general opinion, telegrams in Persia went by camel, I believed that the correspondence of the governor with the center would give me enough time to prepare the next step - to cross one more border - the Indian one, and to do this, of course, without asking permission from the Persian authorities. .

But it turned out that I was mistaken in thinking that I have a lot of time. On the second morning of our stay in the house, when we were sitting on the mound discussing the situation, a car suddenly drove up, from which two Chekist-looking subjects with revolvers jumped out. We retreated into the house with record speed. Obviously, the Chekists decided that shooting would immediately follow from the house, because with the same speed they rushed into the car and hurriedly left. If they had known that we did not have any weapons, events would have unfolded, apparently, quite differently.

In any case, it became clear that we must hurry. There was an English vice-consul in Duzdab, whose main activity was to buy up and send duty-free Persian carpets to England. At the same time, intelligence and information were arranged for him, apparently, by the Bolsheviks. When I tried to see him, he refused to accept me. Later (already in India) it was found out that his Bolshevik informants reported to him that we were German agents. Directly in front of us was a huge, by no means guarded by the Persians, the border with Balochistan. Not guarded, because behind it was the Baloch desert, dry and scorched by the sun. But for the British, on the other side of the border, a half-savage Baloch tribe carried some protection. We had to quickly find a way. In the Duzdaba market I got into

conversation with the Hindu merchants, asking them which of the local Hindu merchants was an English man and enjoyed their confidence. I was pointed to this. I suggested that he take me to the guard of the Baloch tribe on the other side of the border. What he did with the onset of night, taking us by car to the Balochs.

With the leader of the tribe, I quickly came to an agreement. He equipped a caravan of three or four warriors and several camels, and we set off through the Baloch desert. It should be noted in brackets that when we left the Soviet paradise, we did not have a penny of money, and until now all travel was at the expense of His Majesty the Shah, and from now on - at the expense of His Graceful Majesty the King of England. At least, neither I nor the leader of the tribe had any doubts about this. It was

so hot that our caravan could only move at night. While riding a camel

turns you inside out, and you prefer to walk a good part of the way. My companion Maksimov also quarreled with some camel, roughly kicking her in the face with his foot. The camel did not say anything, but on the way she tried to take a position behind his camel and, keeping at a distance of two or three meters, so that he could not reach her with his foot, she spat at him very accurately. She was indifferent to his Soviet dictionary. This was our third journey: the first was through the mountains on horseback, the second was through Persia by car, the third was through the Baloch desert on camels. By a strange coincidence, each of them lasted four days. On the fifth morning we went to the railway line and I turned to the local English resident. My English left much to be

desired, and I don't know what and how the resident understood from the conversation. But he immediately sent a very long telegram to Simla, and the next day a saloon car came for me, in which the Viceroy and ministers of India used to make their business trips. After camels, this mode of communication was very pleasant. Especially the bath; and the cook respectfully inquired what menu we would like.

The winter capital of India was Delhi; but in summer it is so hot there that the British built themselves on the spurs of the Himalayas, at an altitude of 3000 meters, the summer capital - Simla. It was a purely administrative artificial city: in addition to government offices, there were only service personnel and shops. Foreigners there, it seems, were not allowed at all. The British received me

well, settled us in a good hotel. The appearance of our costumes after our travels was very unpresentable. The British found an elegant way out. At the headquarters of the British army of India there was an examination session for staff officers in the Russian language. I was invited to be among the examiners, and with the fee I received, I not only made new costumes for myself and Maksimov, but also had enough money for petty expenses. We arrived in India at the beginning of April.

Correspondence with London began. It lasted for a very long time. The local authorities understood that I presented a scattering of all kinds of information about Soviet Russia and that I did not at all intend to make a secret out of them, but, on the contrary, I considered it my duty to share them with all sorts of opponents of communism. But, obviously, not being able to use them, they preferred to leave the operation of these placers to qualified people of the metropolis, but for now they left me alone.

I had a lot of free time. I felt safe here and walked around the outskirts of Simla. During one of my walks, I came to some Hindu temple, from which a lively monkey tribe poured out towards me. To my surprise, the head of the tribe came up to me and extended his hand. Struck by such courtesy, I handed him mine. Here everything became clear. The coming natives bring all sorts of delicacies to these sacred animals, and the head of the tribe looked in my hand for what I brought him.

I negotiated the continuation of my journey (to Europe) with the head of the Intelligence Service of India, Sir Eisenmonger. He, too, was a source of surprise for me, this time extremely pleasant. He was a perfect gentleman of absolute decency. Meanwhile, his work was intelligence and counterintelligence, which was done by our GPU. Comparing this gentleman with the gopeushny bastard, I was amazed at the difference.

While waiting for news from London, I read and, as far as the heat would allow, played tennis. Sir Eisenmonger did a poor job of explaining to me why the correspondence with London took so long. In any case, I understood that the government was dragging this out because the British Labor Party, extremely pro-communist at that time, headed by its leader MacDonald, was going to use the story with me to cause all sorts of trouble to the government, and in particular, unpleasant debates in chamber, which the government wants to avoid and therefore drags out my case in every possible way. I really wanted to pour

a good bucket of cold water in the press on the hot pro-communism of MacDonald and the Labor Party. And the tub was in my hands. But I wasn't at all

1 After I wrote all this, I accidentally learned that I owed much less to my successful move to India for my initiative than to the fact that I had a guardian angel, which I did not suspect: it was the English consul in Sistane Skrin, who, not without difficulty, convinced the Indian administration of the need for me to move to India.

I'm sure if I give it to Eisenmenger, something will come of it, and I saved my weapon for better times. And the weapons were as follows.

When the Soviets introduced their fraudulent concession policy, among those caught this fishing rod was the English company Lena-Goldfields.

Before the revolution, this company owned the famous gold deposits on the Lena. The October Revolution deprived the company of these placers. The placers did not work, the equipment fell into disrepair and was destroyed. With the introduction of the NEP, the Bolsheviks offered these placers for concession. The company entered into negotiations. The Bolsheviks offered very favorable terms. The company had to import all the new equipment, dredges and everything else, set up production and could, on very favorable terms, dispose of almost all the gold mined, yielding only a part to the Bolsheviks at world market prices. True, the Bolsheviks introduced such a clause into the contract that production should exceed a certain minimum per month; if production falls below this minimum, the contract is terminated and the equipment becomes the property of the Soviets. At the same time, the Soviet authorities easily explained to the concessionaires that their main concern was the largest possible production, and they must protect themselves from the fact that the concessionaire, for some reason of his own, would want to "freeze" the mines. The company recognized this as logical, and willingly accepted this point - its intentions were by no means to "freeze" the mines, but, on the contrary, it was interested in the highest possible production. All

expensive and complex equipment was imported, British engineers got the job done, and the mines began to work at full speed. When Moscow decided that the right moment had come, appropriate directives were given in party order, and "suddenly" the workers of the mines "revolted." At a general meeting they demanded that the British capitalists increase their wages, not by 10% or 20%, but by twenty times. Which was completely impossible. This requirement was accompanied by others, equally absurd and impracticable. And a general strike was called. Representatives of the company rushed to the local Soviet authorities. They kindly explained

that we have a workers' government, and the workers are free to do what they consider necessary in their interests; in particular, the authorities cannot intervene in any way in the conflict between the workers and the employer and advise to resolve this matter by amicable agreement, negotiations with the trade union. Negotiations with the trade union, of course, yielded nothing: according to Moscow's secret instructions, the trade union did not make any concessions. Representatives of the company rushed to the central authorities - there they were just as kindly answered the same thing - our workers are free and can fight for their interests as they see fit. The strike continued, time passed, there was no production, and Glavkontsessskom began to remind the company that, by virtue of the above clause, the contract would be terminated and the company would lose everything that it had imported.

Then the Lena-Goldfields company finally realized that all this was a fraudulent combination and that it had simply been scammed. She appealed to the British government. The issue was discussed in the English Chamber. The Labor Party and its leader MacDonald were extremely pro-communist at this time; they rejoiced that there was at last a country where the workers could bring the greedy capitalists to their knees, and where the country's authorities protected the workers. As a result of the debate, the British government turned to the Soviet with a note. The note was discussed at the

Politburo. The answer, of course, was in the same swindling sort that the Soviet government does not consider it possible to interfere in conflicts between the trade union and the employer - the workers in the Soviet Union are free to do what they want. During the debate, Bukharin takes the floor and says that he read in the English newspapers a report on the debate that took place in the House of Commons. The most remarkable thing, says Bukharin, is that these cretins from the Labor Party take our arguments at face value; that fool MacDonald made a heated philippic in this spirit, completely justifying us and blaming the Company. I propose that Comrade MacDonald be sent to Kyshtym as secretary of the Party Ukom, and that Misha Tomsy be sent to London as prime minister. Since the conversation turns into jocular tones, Kamenev, who presides, returns the debate to serious ground and, interrupting Bukharin, says to him half-jokingly: "Well, proposals, please, in writing." Deprived

Bukharin's words, does not calm down, takes a sheet of paper and writes:

"Resolution of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Soviet Union dated such and such date. Appoint Comrade MacDonald as Secretary of the Ukom in Kyshtym, ensuring travel through one ticket with Comrade Urquhart.
To appoint T. Tomsy Prime Minister in London, providing him with two starched collar."

The sheet goes from hand to hand, Stalin writes: "For. I. Stalin. Zinoviev "doesn't object." Last Kamenev "votes" and hands over the sheet to me "for registration". I keep it in my papers.

Publish all this in print - it would be a good blow to these brainless pro-communists and according to Macdonald. But it has to be done right. Until I see how.

One fine day, while playing tennis in Simla, I am waiting with my random partner for the previous game to be over and the court free for us. My interlocutor is a red-haired Irishman. He knows who I am and asks questions about Soviet Russia. In five minutes of conversation, I am convinced that he is an extremely intelligent person, with a lively thought, perfectly aware of Soviet Russia and very well versed in Soviet affairs. I ask other partners who it is. This is O'Hara, Indian Home Secretary. This is the man for my Bukharin paper. I tell him that I have important business with him. A date is set for tomorrow. Arriving at him, I show the paper, translate it and explain what the matter is. "Can you hand it over to our government?" I say that this is just my intention. "And can you write us an explanatory note explaining

how all this happened?" - "Certainly can". "You have no idea what a service you are doing to England," says O'Hara. The paper with explanations goes to London.

But after that, neither in India nor in France, I do not find in the press the slightest trace of it. In my opinion, the British Tory government should seize the opportunity and give it to the press. It would be a good blow to the pro-communists. But it does not appear in the press.

Then, already in France, I had the opportunity to speak with the assistant head of the Intelligence Service (I will tell about this later, this institution asks me to examine the forged Politburo protocols that the GPU fabricates and sells to it). I tell him about the document I gave to O'Hare and tell him that it would be a great pity if he died somewhere in a desk drawer. He says that he has not heard anything about such a document, but when he is in London, he will ask his boss. Some time later, returning from London, he informs me of the fate of the document.

The document, having arrived in London, went straight to the Prime Minister. Instead of submitting it to the press, the Prime Minister acted much smarter. He called the head of the Intelligence Service and told him: "Be so kind as to ask for an audience with the leader of the opposition, Mr. McDonald. In a personal meeting, give him personally, in your own hands, this document that I received. I believe that since this document concerns Mr. MacDonald personally, it should be handed over to him personally. Head of Intelligence Service and did.

The document made an extraordinary impression on MacDonald. MacDonald was a man not of such a brilliant mind, but a man of profound integrity. He was the founder and undisputed leader of the English Socialist Party. He had complete confidence in Russian Bolshevism and supported it in every possible way disinterestedly and with conviction. Now he found out what Moscow thinks about him and learned from the document that is absolutely indisputable. He survived this blow very much, retired for a while, leaving for his native Scotland, but having digested everything, he became the same staunch anti-communist and tried to captivate the party with him. Meanwhile, it was not so easy. When he broke with Russian communism, only part of the party followed him, and a smaller one at that. But this

allowed the creation in England during the severe economic crisis of 1931 of the Government of National Unity - a minority of the Labor Party with MacDonald plus the Conservatives had a majority in the House;

the Conservatives left MacDonald to head the government - it was an unprecedented government of the Tories and socialists on the basis of anti-communism. It must be said that then, through a tireless struggle within the socialist party, MacDonald gradually transferred its majority from a pro-communist position to an anti-communist one. My stay in

India is getting longer and longer. Suddenly it suddenly turns out that it is based on a misunderstanding. At the beginning of August, I lose my patience and begin to suspect that the British authorities are leading me by the nose and are not telling me the true reasons for the delay. I tell Eisenmenger about my doubts. He apparently finds my suspicions offensive and, in order to dissuade me, shows the correspondence on my behalf - from the Minister of Indian Affairs to the Viceroy. Actually, he should not show it, the correspondence is secret. What is secret about it is that the English for the Hindus support the myth that the Viceroy is a huge figure with great authority; in fact, he is a theatrical figure and is subordinate to the Minister of Indian Affairs, who commands him. But that's not what interests me. I see from the correspondence that all the time the question remains in force about the troubles that opposition in the House can cause to the government on my account; but for what reason? It turns out that because the British government will give me the right of asylum in England. But I never expressed the slightest intention of going to England, and I never asked for it. "How," Eisenmenger is surprised, "but in the very first conversation you expressed a desire to go to Europe." - "Of course, to Europe, but not to England." Speaking of Europe, I did not realize that for an Englishman in India to go to Europe, this means going to England. And all the difficulties are connected with this.

I assure Eisenmenger that I have not the slightest desire to go to England. "Where do you want to go?" "I want to go to France." "Oh, what a pity you didn't say that right away, you would have been in France a long time ago."

Indeed, while still in Moscow, I decided that I was going to France. According to Nenashev's old pre-war guide to France, I even chose a hotel where I would stay when I arrived in Paris. Not knowing Paris and believing that in Paris, as in Moscow, it is most interesting to live in the very center (which, of course, is completely wrong), I chose a hotel near the Opera and the Stock Exchange, the Vivien Hotel on Vivien

Street. Further events unfold very quickly. The British government asks the French to grant me the right of asylum in France. The French agree, and the French consul in Calcutta gives me a permanent residence permit in France. And in mid-August, 1928, with my Maximov, I boarded the Pand O Company steamship, the twenty-thousand-ton Maloya, in Bombay, and after two weeks of travel, landed in Marseilles. I take a train to Paris, I arrive in Paris and at the Lyon station I say to the taxi driver, enjoying the moment that I foresaw back in Moscow: "Hotel Vivienne on Rue Vivienne."

Taffy has such a charming place: "On a hot July day in 1921, a person in a very shabby jacket and a battered hat came out of the subway at Concorde Square. The person screwed up his eyes from the hot July sun, tapped his fingers on the parapet and said: "All this is very good, but ke fer? fer to ke?" This is how the history of the Russian emigration began.

CHAPTER 17. EMIGRATION. FINLAND. BERLIN.

EMIGRATION. ARTICLES AND BOOK. MINUTES OF THE POLITBURO. BESEDOVSKY'S FLIGHT. BLYUMKIN AND MAXIMOV AGAIN. FINLAND. MANNERHEIM. RUSSIAN PEOPLE'S ARMY. BERLIN. ROSENBERG AND LEIBBRANDT. LAST TALK WITH LEIBBRANDT

What to do? For me there was no problem. After all, the entire Soviet system is based on lies. It was necessary to tell the truth about it, to describe what Moscow carefully concealed, in particular, the mechanism of power and the events that I witnessed. First of all, it was necessary to publish all this in the emigre press. At that time

(1928-1929) two émigré daily newspapers, Vozrozhdeniye and Latest News, were published in Paris. Both were anti-Bolshevik, but strongly

different political line. Vozrozhdenie was a right-wing newspaper and irreconcilably hostile to communism. Latest News was a left-wing newspaper. It was led by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the revolutionary Provisional Government, Milyukov, a pillar of the Russian intelligentsia, a politically mediocre man. The newspaper from issue to issue assured readers that the Soviet Union was undergoing an evolution towards a normal system, that the Bolsheviks were no longer Bolsheviks in essence, that communism, if not completely gone, was rapidly disappearing, etc. All this was completely false and extremely stupid. I could not write for this newspaper. I gave a series of articles to the Renaissance. And then he wrote a book in French. But publishing it or publishing my essays in the French press was not at all easy. The French left sympathized with the "advanced socialist experience" of Soviet Russia and tried in every possible way to hush up everything that I wrote. And since I described the events that I witnessed with scrupulous accuracy, Moscow, knowing that it could not refute anything in my writings, adopted the tactic of a conspiracy of silence. Neither Pravda, nor Yumanite, nor any other communist press ever mentioned my name. Once, out of inexperience, Romain Rolland tried to argue against one of my articles, but he got a good scolding from the communist government for mentioning my name.

The publishers were not there either. It was not until 1930 that my book was published, and even then with large cuts. What I wrote was not suitable for anyone. The left at that time did not want any attacks on the "advanced socialist country", the right, with amazing myopia and incomprehension of the events taking place in the world, considered it excellent that thanks to Bolshevism and the anarchy associated with it, Russia emerged from the ranks of the great powers. The prediction that communism has a great future ahead of it, that a world civil war has begun in the world, and that communism poses the main danger to humanity now, was considered as a partisan exaggeration of a Russian emigrant (and then, some young Russian tries to teach old, experienced politicians).

But the book did not satisfy me at all. Not only because of the abbreviations, in which all conclusions were crossed out and only evidence of what was seen remained, but also for reasons that concerned me personally. I had to fulfill the obligation made in Moscow to my friends and write that I was an anti-communist before I started working in the Central Committee of the party. At the same time, I took on the appearance of some kind of adventurous James Bond, who bravely and cunningly penetrated into the enemy fortress, but in fact it was not at all like that, and I could not tell about myself and about my real evolution. So I eventually lost interest in the book. In addition, I could not talk about many things, living people who remained in Russia always took a big risk if I mentioned their name or referred to them.

Now, when a lot of time has passed, and times have changed, I can tell what I witnessed and how it really happened. Some time later, upon my

arrival in France, I was approached by representatives of the English Intelligence Service, asking for an examination. The GPU resident in Riga, Gaiduk (this is, of course, a nickname, not a real surname) sold the Politburo protocols to the British authorities, and the British paid extremely dearly for them, mistaking them for real ones. Gaiduk, of course, never in his life saw a real protocol of the Politburo and fabricated his own by virtue of his own understanding. But the British knew much less than he did what the real ones looked like. I have made so many of them in my life that it was not the slightest difficulty for me to establish that fakes were being sold to the British. The British stopped buying them. I was living at that time in Paris in a hotel. One day there was a knock on

the door. "Sign in." A clearly Chekist-looking person entered and calmly introduced himself: "I am Gaiduk, a resident of the GPU in Riga. I have come to you for this matter. Through me, the British buy the protocols of the Politburo. Of course, it is better for you than anyone else to know if they are real. I know and I am also quite clear that your opinion will determine whether they continue to buy them or not. I will not hide from you that I earn very well on them. If your opinion is not negative, I offer you half the fee for the protocols. I answered him: "It is surprising that before you came to me, you did not inquire about me in your institution. You would be told that I am not for sale, and that would save you

from a pointless visit. "You see, Mr. Bazhanov," says Gaiduk, "you are a completely fresh immigrant. Now you are publishing articles that are successful, and everything is going well. Believe my experience - in a year all this will pass, and you will have to work hard to earn the bitter emigrant bread. Meanwhile, by agreeing to my proposal, you will earn so much in six months that you can live comfortably all your life with this money. I inquired: "Tell me, Mr. Gaiduk, have you seen Marcel Pagnol's latest play, *Topaz*?" No, Mr. Gaiduk is not interested in plays. "So, there is a place in the play when a noble-looking old man comes to the municipal councilor for the purpose of blackmail, and as a result of the conversation, the councilor asks him to leave, but without turning his back, because the temptation to kick below the back will be too great. That's what I'm asking you about - get out, but backing away, otherwise I really want to help you get out with your foot. Gaiduk remained imperturbable. "Please, if it pleases you." At the door, he nevertheless stopped and added: "You will be very sorry that you did not accept my offer." He made a mistake. I am generally indifferent to money and do not appreciate what

money can buy. And emigrant poverty has never embarrassed me. On the contrary, I really appreciate what money cannot buy: friendship, love, loyalty to the word.

Some time after my arrival in Paris, which passed quietly and imperceptibly, a high-profile story took place with Besedovsky's flight from the Parisian embassy. The Plenipotentiary of the USSR in France, Dovgalevsky, was on a very long sick leave, and Besedovsky, an adviser to the embassy, replaced him as plenipotentiary. One fine day, to escape arrest at the embassy, he escaped by jumping over the wall of the embassy's garden. For a month, the press relished with admiration an unprecedented event - the ambassador flees from his own embassy, jumping over the wall. Only the reason for this flight remained unknown to everyone - it was unprofitable for Besedovsky to talk about it himself, and the British government, who knew everything, preferred to remain silent. The big adventurer

Bogovut-Kolomiets revolved around the USSR embassies in England and France, arranging all sorts of commercial, banking and other business for the Soviets. His scope was great. At this time, the world crisis was unfolding in the form of an economic catastrophe. Bogovut came up with an idea: to propose to the British government to give the Soviets a colossal loan. The Soviets at this time began their five-year plans for industrialization, but were severely constrained by the lack of funds to purchase the necessary foreign equipment. Bogovut wanted the British to give the Soviets the machinery and materials needed for industrialization over a period of years in the form of a long-term loan; at the same time, English heavy industry would have jobs and emerge from the crisis; The Soviets, for their part, had to undertake to stop revolutionary work in the British colonies, and especially in India. But Bogovut did not feel any vocation for philanthropy and wanted to arrange this loan in such a way that everything would go through him and that he would receive one percent commission, which, taking into account the huge amount of the loan, would make him a big millionaire for the rest of his days. But he himself could not carry out this combination and persuaded Besedovsky to take part in it.

The script was set up like this. Bogovut, who had his own entrances everywhere, lets the British government know that Moscow would like to receive such a loan, but does not want to risk unsuccessful negotiations and instructs not even the plenipotentiary in England, but the ambassador in Paris, Besedovsky, to discuss and conclude an agreement with the British in perfect secrecy. government. And only after that the case will move to official and public ground.

The British government became extremely interested and sent a whole delegation to Paris for secret negotiations with Besedovsky, which included two ministers, including Sir Samuel Hoare. The delegation discussed all issues of the loan with Besedovsky. Besedovsky warned her that, according to Moscow's instructions, until the very final conclusion of the treaty, everything should be kept secret: even to London's appeal to Moscow, the latter would answer that she was not making any proposals, and would break off the negotiations. The delegation returned to London with rosy and optimistic moods. But Samuel Khor took a sharply negative position - all this is a bluff, and there is nothing serious behind it. "I myself am a Jew," Horus said, "and I know my co-religionists well; this type, represented by Besedovsky, type

frivolous; don't believe a single word he says. I propose to ask Moscow to check everything in the most official manner.

In the end, the Cabinet of Ministers agreed with him, and the British ambassador in Moscow was instructed to contact Chicherin for confirmation. Chicherin, of course, replied that he did not know anything about the negotiations or the loan, and he would immediately ask the higher authorities (that is, the Politburo). He came to the Politburo with a bitter complaint - you are putting me in a stupid position: you are negotiating with the British government and do not even consider it necessary to inform me, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, about this. The Politburo reassured him, no one even thought about any negotiations. It became clear that Besedovsky was pursuing some kind of adventurous combination. Chicherin summoned him to Moscow. Since the British no longer showed any signs of life, Besedovsky realized that the case had burst, and, under the pretext of illness, refused to go to Moscow. After some time, the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs pretended to convene a meeting of ambassadors in the countries of Western Europe, specifically to get Besedovsky. He again refused to come. Then the Politburo lost patience and instructed Roizenman, a member of the Central Control Commission, to bring Besedovsky alive or dead. Roizenman was given the corresponding mandate. Roizenman arrived in Paris, entered the embassy, showed his mandate to the Chekists, who, under the guise of porters, are on duty at the entrance, and said: "From now on, I am the boss here, and you must follow only my orders. In particular, no one should leave the embassy without my permission." The Chekists asked: "Even Comrade Ambassador?" "Especially Comrade Ambassador." Then Roizenman, informing the first secretary about everything, occupied the ambassador's office and summoned Besedovsky to him. He yelled at Besedovsky and said that he would be immediately taken to Moscow, if necessary, by force. Realizing that things were bad, Besedovsky rushed to the exit. The Chekists blocked the exit and threatened that they would shoot if he tried to force the exit. Besedovsky returned and remembered that he had seen a small staircase in the garden against the wall, left by the gardener. With her

help, he climbed up the wall and jumped down to the other side. After that, he appeared before the police commissioner of the quarter and demanded that the police release his wife and son, who remained in the embassy. The commissioner telephoned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The general secretary of the ministry said that the embassy is extraterritorial, but the police must obey the request of the ambassador and they can be brought into the embassy. The wife and son were released. Besedovsky asked for asylum, and the police carefully hid him. A few days later, the postman brought a summons - Besedovsky was summoned to Moscow for a court session on charges of treason; they simply wanted to show him that you cannot hide from the GPU, and that it knows t

In the case of Besedovsky, the press raised too much noise, and attempts on his life. The GPU refrained, but tried to cause him all sorts of trouble.

After Besedovsky's flight from the embassy and before the war, I met with him from time to time, mainly for security reasons - in those years, like me, he was under the threat of the GPU, and we exchanged information about the dangers that could threaten us. He was engaged in journalism, at that time he did not fabricate fakes, but what he wrote was light and full of fiction. When he met with me, he asked me about Stalin, his secretariat, members of the Politburo, and the apparatus of the Central Committee. I have never made a secret of my knowledge on these matters and have answered them. After the war, he used all this information with appropriate perversions.

After the war, I rarely saw him again. At that time, I completely moved away from politics and the press, I was engaged in technology. Besedovsky said that he was engaged in journalism. At this time, a number of fakes appeared: "Notes of Captain Krylov", "Soviet marshals are talking to you", "Memoirs of General Vlasov" - all this was supposedly written by some Krylov, Kalinov, who actually never existed. I was not interested in this third-rate and suspicious literature, I did not read anything of this and did not know who makes it. But in 1950, Delbar's book "The Real Stalin" appeared. I did not know Delbar, but I remembered that Delbar collaborated with Besedovsky, got interested and got acquainted with the book. It was full of lies and fabrications. It immediately became clear to me that this was the work of Besedovsky. In particular, what he once asked me about Stalin and the party

top, was here, but completely perverted and full of fantasies, and represented a mockery of the readers. In addition, the Book has said many times that the author knows this or that detail (usually invented and false) from a former member of Stalin's secretariat. This cast a shadow over me - there was no other former secretary of Stalin abroad. Specialists in Soviet affairs, reading the book, might think that it was I who supplied Besedovsky with his materials.

I demanded an explanation from Besedovsky. He did not deny that he wrote everything, and agreed that he was mocking readers. To my threat to expose his inventions in the press, he replied that the book was written by Delbar, that he, Besedovsky, had nothing to do with it formally, and by attacking him, I risk being sued for unfounded accusations.

I suggested that he never see me again and never see him again.
saw.

Around 1930 a great personal change took place in the GPU. In particular, Messing took the place of the head of the foreign department Trilisser. In this regard, both the composition of the staff and the nature of the work of the GPU's residency abroad changed dramatically. Trilisser was a fanatical communist, he also selected his residents from fanatical communists. These were dangerous shots that would stop at nothing. Cases such as the bombing of the cathedral in Sofia (when the Bulgarian tsar and the entire government were present there) or the kidnapping of General Kutepov in Paris were their usual practice. But by 1930, these cadres were dispersed: many of them sympathized with Trotsky and the opposition, they were not trusted. With Messing came new cadres, calm officials who, of course, tried, but mostly pretended to try very hard, and were not at all inclined to take any risks; and if the enterprise was risky, then there were always objective reasons why nothing ever came of it. If in 1929 there was still an attempt on my life in France (and then under the guise of an automobile accident), then 1930 ends the most dangerous period for me. True, at the end of 1929, Blyumkin, appointed to Turkey as a resident of the GPU, came to Paris to organize an assassination attempt on me. The GPU, in entrusting the case to him, proceeded, firstly, from the fact that he personally knew me, and secondly, from the fact that his cousin Maximov, whom I brought to Paris, met with me. Blumkin found Maximov. Maximov, having arrived in France, had to start working, like everyone else, and behaved decently for more than a year. Blumkin assured him that the GPU had long forgotten him, but for the GPU it was extremely important whether Bazhanov still had an organization in Moscow and with whom he was connected there; and that if Maksimov returns to work at the GPU, follows Bazhanov and helps to find out his connections, and if he leaves and organizes an assassination attempt on Bazhanov, then he will be forgiven, and his financial affairs will be arranged on a completely different basis. Maksimov agreed and again began to write both reports to me. But a year later he made an attempt to organize an assassination attempt on me in such a way as not to risk anything; nothing came of it, but it became quite clear that he was again working for the GPU. He then hastily disappeared from my horizon. In 1935, in the summer of Trouville, I bought a Russian newspaper and learned from it that the Russian refugee Arkady Maximov either fell or jumped from the first platform of the Eiffel Tower. The newspaper speculated that he had committed suicide. It is possible, but still there is some mystery left for me.

When Blumkin himself returned from Paris to Moscow and reported that the assassination attempt he had organized on me had succeeded (in fact, it seems that the Chekists had thrown someone else out of the train instead of me by mistake), Stalin widely spread the rumor that I had been liquidated. He did this for pedagogical purposes, so that others would be discouraged from running: we never forget, our arm is long, and sooner or later it will overtake the one who fled.

From Moscow, Blumkin went to Turkey. But his hatred for Trotsky had long since passed, he came into contact with the Trotskyist opposition and agreed to take some secret materials to Trotsky (who was at that time in Turkey on the Princes' Islands). His employee, Lisa, betrayed him to the GPU. He was summoned to Moscow allegedly to report on his affairs, arrested and shot. The next attempt on

my life took place only in 1937. Some Spaniard, obviously an anarchist or a Spanish communist, tried to stab me with a dagger when I returned home, as every evening, leaving the car in the garage. On this occasion it was

one can see how the work of the GPU has degenerated. The GPU agent himself did not take any risks - apparently, some unfortunate Spanish anarchist was assured that I was Franco's agent or

something like that. At this time in Paris the GPU was settling old scores in this way. But there have been more difficult cases, such as the murder in the Bois de Boulogne of the former Soviet employee Navashin, a defector.

During the Spanish Civil War, a whole fauna of "leftist" scoundrels fed near it. The Reds in Spain plundered churches, monasteries, and bourgeois and took them to France to "sell" the booty. A number of dark "leftists" helped them, and most of the proceeds remained in the pockets of intermediaries. And for the remainder, the Spanish Reds tried to buy essential goods that were not in Red Spain. A gang of businessmen led by Navashin arranged the following combination: a small part of the Reds' money was used to buy canned food and other goods, but they were completely spoiled and for next to nothing. They were loaded onto the ship and sent red. At the same time, the gang informed the Francoist agent in Paris which ship was going where and on what route. The Reds did not have a navy, Franco did. And the white gunboat sank the ship. I had to shrug my shoulders and prepare the next ship, while earning a lot of money. But once something did not work out for the captain (the navigational instruments seemed to have deteriorated), and he went in a completely different, unforeseen path; therefore the gunboat did not meet him, and he reached the port of the Reds. The goods were unloaded, and everything was cleared up. Navashin was stabbed with a dagger, from which he died.

In 1939 the World War began. At the very beginning, a funny thing happened to me. For several years I kept a large and serious reference file on Soviet Russia. It helped me a lot in my journalistic work, but doing it required a systematic reading of Soviet newspapers and took too much time. So I decided to sell it and, beyond expectation, got a large amount of money for it. In 1939, I went on a summer holiday to Belgium, in Ostend, and since there was a danger of an imminent war in the air, I took all my money with me. It rained in Ostend for several days in a row, and I decided to go to the French Riviera, where you are always provided with good weather in summer. In order not to carry all my money with me to hotels, I left it in Ostend in a bank safe. On the Riviera, I enjoyed the sun and the sea and didn't even read the papers. Once, when I went out to swim, I saw posters with two flags on the walls - mobilization, which means war. I had hardly returned to Paris when the war began. The Belgian border was immediately closed on both sides, and my permanent visa to Belgium, like all visas, was cancelled. Within two or three days, I was convinced that this position was for a long time. I was in a stupid position: all my money is in Belgium, in a safe, and I can't get there.

I had to take action. I got into the car and drove to Belgium. The roads of France were completely deserted, I could drive at maximum speed, all the cars hid, because the troops requisitioned oncoming cars on the roads; True, only certain brands and dimensions, but the public, not knowing these military secrets, just in case, did not show their noses with cars. As I approached the border, I saw the building of the French customs, near which several officers of the field gendarmerie were basking in the sun. I went to the eldest of them, the captain, and explained that my money was left in Belgium and I wanted to go after it. The officers laughed in unison: "You fell from the moon: you don't know that there is a war, and the borders are closed. And you want to ride in your car. Haven't you heard that no car can leave France without the special permission of the commander of the military district? I waited out all these ridicule and said: "Captain, I address you as an officer: I give my word of honor that in twenty-four hours I will be back here." I hit a weak point - military gendarmerie officers always secretly suffered that army officers in their combat code of honor did not put them on an equal footing with themselves. My captain said: "But the Belgians won't let you through anyway." "I take on the Belgians." He gave up: "Try it."

After half a kilometer, there was a Belgian border post. From him they called the head of the Belgian police Fergulst, who personally knew me, and I drove to Belgium. On the streets of Brussels, I enjoyed great success - my car with a Paris number was almost

the only one; passers-by mistook me for someone who had come from France on an important mission. I went to Ostend, took my money and returned to France the next day. As I drove up to the French border checkpoint, I saw from a distance how my captain jumped up and solemnly pointed his finger at me: "Here he is!" I easily guessed what had happened. During the day, all the other officers mocked him: there is no doubt that he was an open German spy who was fleeing, who had nothing to lose, and he went for broke, trying to break through the gendarmerie border checkpoint. And he did it with good words. The captain shook my hand and almost thanked me for returning. In all the pre-war years, I did everything I could to fight Bolshevism. But I never liked to deal with trifles and petty matters, and therefore I did not take any

part in the noisy and unproductive emigre political life. Every emigration always forms many small Negro kingdoms, which compete and quarrel with each other. I stayed away from all this. When the Soviets attacked Finland, it turned out that I did the right thing. I was the only person who decided to act on this war, and all the main émigré organizations unanimously supported me and followed my action. A letter was written to Marshal Mannerheim, in which the organizations asked the marshal to give me complete confidence and promised to support me in every possible way. The letter was signed by the All-Military Union, the Vozrozhdeniye newspaper, and even the chairman of the Supreme Monarchist Council (although I had nothing to do with monarchism). Mannerheim invited me to come to Finland.

I proceeded from the fact that the sub-Soviet population dreams of getting rid of communism. I wanted to form the Russian People's Army from captured Red Army soldiers, only volunteers; not so much to fight, but to offer Soviet soldiers to come over to our side and go to liberate Russia from communism. If my opinion about the mood of the population was correct (and since it was after the nightmares of collectivization and Yezhovshchina, then I believe that it is correct), then I wanted to snowball Moscow, start with a thousand people, take all my strength from that side and reach Moscow with fifty

divisions.

French public opinion at that time was completely on the side of little heroic Finland. The French authorities welcomed my initiative and helped me quickly overcome the formalities - the head of the political department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took me to the War Ministry so that all the papers could be done immediately, and some general in the ministry wished me every success. In early February, I left for Finland. On an airplane through Belgium, Holland and Denmark, I flew to Stockholm without incident. From Stockholm it was

necessary to fly to Finland through the Gulf of Bothnia in an old, exhausted civilian airplane. Before departure, we sat in the airplane and waited for a long time. The Finns did not have military aviation, the Soviets had, and strong. She bombarded Finland all the time with impunity. Soviet patrols flew over the bay. We had to wait for the patrol to pass and retire sufficiently. Then the airplane broke off and raced with all the power of its engines and with the hope that the Soviet patrol would not suddenly think of turning back, because in this case we would be left with horns and legs.

Everything went well, and we were already flying up to the Finnish coast. Sitting at the window, I saw that flames were escaping from under the wing. I did not know what this meant, and drew the attention of the person sitting in front of me (I met him later - he turned out to be the Finnish Minister of Economics Enkel, who traveled to Western European countries to supply Finland). He showed with gestures that he also did not understand what was happening. But we were already seated. When we sat down, we approached the pilot and Enkel asked him if it was normal that flames were coming out from under the wing from here. The pilot laughed - it is absolutely impossible; if the flames were escaping from here, then we would not be talking here now, but would be at the bottom of the Gulf of Bothnia. We can only shrug.

Marshal Mannerheim received me on January 15 at his Headquarters in Saint-Miquel. Of the various political people that I saw in my life, Marshal Mannerheim made me

almost the best experience. He was a real man, a giant who held the whole of Finland on his shoulders. The whole country unconditionally and completely followed him. He was a former cavalry general. I expected to meet a military man, not so strong in politics. I met the biggest man - the most honest, the purest and able to take on the solution of any political problems.

I told him my plan and his reasons. Mannerheim said that it makes sense to try: he will give me the opportunity to talk with the prisoners of one camp (500 people); "If they follow you, organize your army. But I am an old military man and I strongly doubt that these people, who escaped from hell and escaped almost by a miracle, would want to return to this hell again of their own free will. The fact is that there were two fronts:

the main, narrow Karelian, forty kilometers wide, on which the communists drove one division after another; divisions went through the mountains of corpses and were destroyed to the end - there were no prisoners here. And another front from Lake Ladoga to the White Sea, where everything was covered with snow to a depth of a meter and a half. Here the Reds advanced along the roads, and the same thing always happened: the Soviet division broke through inland, the Finns surrounded, cut it off and destroyed it in fierce battles; there were very few prisoners left, and they were in the prisoner camps. Indeed, they were saved almost miraculously. Our

conversation with Mannerheim quickly turned to other topics - questions of the war, social, political. And it went on all day. As I said, all of Finland looked at Mannerheim and expected salvation only from him. His position at the same time was rather inconvenient to find solutions to the most important social, economic and political issues, asking for advice from people who expected everything from him. I was an outsider, and my work in the Soviet government gave me state experience; besides, I dealt with these questions a lot; therefore, a conversation with me on the problems that Mannerheim faced was interesting for him. On this day, Soviet aircraft bombed Saint Michele three times. The Chief of the General Staff came to beg Mannerheim to come down to the shelter. Mannerheim asked me: "Would you prefer to go down?" I preferred not to go down - the bombardment did not interfere with me. We continued to talk. The chief of staff looked at me almost with hatred. I understood him: a bomb that accidentally fell on our house would have ended the resistance of Finland - it was all supported by an old unbending marshal. But at that moment I was already a military man: it was a foregone conclusion that I would be in command of my army, and Mannerheim must have felt that I did not feel fear or excitement from bombs.

In the camp for Soviet prisoners of war, what I expected happened. All of them were enemies of communism. I spoke to them in a language they understood. The result - out of 500 people, 450 volunteered to fight against Bolshevism. Of the remaining fifty people, forty said: "I'm with you with all my heart, but I'm afraid, I'm just afraid." I answered: "If you are afraid, we do not need you, stay in the prison camp."

But they were all soldiers, and I needed more officers. I didn't want to waste time on Soviet captured officers: at the first contact with them, I saw that two or three half-Chekist-half-Stalinists who were among them had already managed to organize a cell and kept the officers in terror - everything about their slightest gestures will be known to anyone in Russia and their families will be held accountable for their every move. I decided to take officers from white emigrants. The All-Military Union, by order, placed its Finnish department at my disposal. I took career officers from him, but it took a lot of time to train them and bring them together politically with the soldiers. They spoke different languages, and I had a lot of work to do with the officers so that they found the right tone and the right relationship with their soldiers. But in the end it all went well. There were many other problems as well. For example, armies live

on the basis of regulations and a certain automatism of reactions. Our army was to be built not on Soviet charters, but on new ones that had to be created anew. For example, such a simple thing: how to address each other. "Comrade" is a soviet; "Mr." is politically impossible and undesirable. So, "citizen", to which the soldiers are quite accustomed; and to the officers "citizen commander" - it came out. I was called "citizen commander".

There was another psychological problem. My officers - Captain Kiselyov, Staff Captain Lugovoi and others were career officers. They were full of respect for my political strength, but it was hard for them to fit in their heads how a civilian would command them in battle. After all, in battle everything rests on the firmness of the commander's soul. Therefore, everything will be kept on mine. Does she exist? It was not clear to them. I saw it indirectly; During our classes, Captain Kiselev told me: "Mr. Bazhanov", and not "citizen commander." The case allowed to solve this problem.

We conducted our classes in Helsingfors on the fifth floor of a large building. Soviet aviation bombarded the city several times a day. Moreover, since it was winter, the clouds were very low. Soviet airplanes rose high into the air in Estonia, approached Helsingfors up to a distance of thirty kilometers, stopped their engines and descended to the city in a silent gliding descent. Suddenly they came out of low clouds, and at the same time the noise of engines and the roar of falling bombs began. We did not have time to go down to the shelter, and we continued to study. Airplanes fly over our house. We hear "z-z-z ..." of a

falling bomb and an explosion. The second "z-z-z ...", and the explosion is now in front of us. Where will the next one land? On us or fly over us? I take the opportunity to continue my theme calmly. But my officers were all listening. Here is the next "z-z-z ...", and the explosion is already behind us. Everyone breathes a sigh of relief. I look at them rather coldly and ask if they understood well what I just said. And Captain Kiselyov replies: "That's right, Citizen Commander." Now they will have no doubts that in battle they will hold on to my firmness of soul.

Everything that could be done in two weeks takes almost two months. Move everyone to another camp closer to the front, organize, everything is going at a snail's pace. Soviet aviation bombards all railway junctions every day with impunity. By evening, each knot is a nightmarish picture of rails and sleepers sticking out in all directions, mixed with deep pits. Every night all this is restored, and the trains run somehow in the remaining hours of the night; but not during the day, when they were bombed by aircraft. It is not until the first days of March that we finish organizing and prepare to go to the front. The first detachment, Captain Kiselyov, leaves; two days later it is followed by the second. Then the third. I'll liquidate the camp so I can get out with the rest of the troops. I manage to get the news that the first detachment is already in action and that about three hundred Red Army men have crossed over to our side. I do not have time to check this information, when on the morning of March 14 I receive a call from Helsingfors from General Walden (he is Marshal Mannerheim's authorized representative to the government): the war is over, I must stop the whole action and immediately

leave for Helsingfors. I arrive at Walden the next day in the morning. Walden tells me that the war is lost, a truce has been signed. "I called you urgently so that you immediately leave Finland immediately. The Soviets, of course, know about your action, and will probably put a condition on your extradition. We cannot betray you; give you the opportunity to leave Finland later - the Soviets will find out about this, accuse us of lying; do not forget that we are in their hands and must avoid everything that can worsen the conditions of the world, which will already be difficult; if you leave now, we will reply to your extradition request that you are no longer in Finland, and it will be easy for them to check the date of

your departure." "But my officers and soldiers? How can I leave them? "Don't worry about your officers: they are all Finnish subjects, they are not in danger. And we, of course, cannot prevent the soldiers who, contrary to your advice, want to return to the USSR, this is their right; but those who choose to remain in Finland will be treated as volunteers in the Finnish army and will be given all the rights of Finnish citizens. Your stay here will not give them anything - we will take care of them. All this is perfectly reasonable and correct. I get into the car, go to Turku and arrive in Sweden the same day. And without incident I return to France. I make reports about my Finnish action: 1) to representatives of emigrant organizations; 2) at a meeting of Russian officers of the general staff; the meeting takes place in the apartment of the head of the 1st Department of the All-Military Union, General Witkovsky; it is attended by Admiral Kedrov, and the former Russian ambassador Maklakov with his auditory tube, and one of the Grand Dukes, if I am not mistaken, Andrei Vladimirovich.

Shortly thereafter, the French campaign unfolds, and in June the Germans enter Paris.

I have been living quietly in Paris for almost a year. In the middle of June 1941, a German in a military uniform unexpectedly came to me (however, they are all in military uniforms, and I understand little about their badges and stripes; this one, it seems, is approximately in the rank of major). He informs me that I must immediately arrive at some office on Jena Avenue. For what? He does not know this. But his car is at my service - he can take me. I reply that I prefer to clean myself up and change my clothes, and I will arrive myself in an hour. I take advantage of this hour to find out by telephone from my Russian acquaintances what kind of institution this is on Jena Avenue. It turns out that the Paris headquarters of Rosenberg. What does he want from me?

I'm coming. I was received by some superiors in general uniform, who told me that I was hastily summoned by the German government to Berlin. The papers will be ready in a few minutes, a direct train to Berlin leaves in the evening, and a sleeping place has been delayed for me in it. Why am I being called? This is unknown to him. Before

evening I have to decide whether I'm going to Berlin or not. No - it means you have to go somewhere through the Spanish border. On the other hand, they invite me extremely politely, why not go and see what's going on. I decide to go. In Berlin, they meet me at the station and take me to some building, which turns out to be the home of the Central Committee of the National Socialist Party. I am received by Deringer, the manager of affairs, who quickly regulates all sorts of everyday issues (hotel, food and other cards, table, etc.). Then he informs me that at 4 o'clock they will call for me - Dr. Leibbrandt will be waiting for me. Who is Dr. Leibbrandt? First Deputy Rosenberg.

At 4 o'clock Dr. Leibbrandt sees me. He turns out to be a "Russian German" - he graduated from the Kiev Polytechnic in his time and speaks Russian, like me. He begins with the fact that our meeting must remain a complete secret both in terms of the content of the conversation that we are about to have, and because I am known as an anti-communist, and if the Soviets find out about my arrival in Berlin, all sorts of verbal notes of protest and others will immediately follow. troubles that are best avoided. While he is speaking, a man in a uniform and boots comes out of an adjoining office, looking like two peas in a pod like Rosenberg, whose large portrait hangs right there on the wall. This is Rosenberg, but Leibbrandt does not introduce him to me. Rosenberg leans on the table and starts talking to me. He also speaks good Russian - he studied at Yuriev (Derpt) University in Russia. But he speaks more slowly, sometimes he has to look for the right words. I expect the usual questions about Stalin, about

the Soviet elite - after all, I am considered an expert on these issues. Indeed, such questions are asked, but in a very special context: if a war suddenly starts tomorrow, what will happen, in my opinion, in the party leadership? A few more such questions, and I clearly understand that war is a matter of days. But the conversation quickly turns to me. What do I think about such and such questions and about such and such problems, etc. Here I do not understand anything - why am I the object of such curiosity of Rosenberg and Leibbrandt? My frank answers that I do not at all agree with their ideology, in particular, I believe that their ultranationalism is a very bad weapon in the fight against communism, since it produces exactly what communism needs: it restores one country against another and leads to a war between them, while the struggle against communism requires the unity and consent of the whole civilized world, this my denial of their doctrine does not at all make a bad impression on them, and they continue to ask me various questions about me. When they finally finished, I say: "From everything that has been said here, it is quite clear that in the very short future you will start a war against the Soviets." Rosenberg is quick to say, "I didn't say that." I say that I am politically experienced enough and do not need to be told and put into my mouth. Let me also put the question to you: "What is your political plan for the war?" Rosenberg says he doesn't quite understand my question. I clarify: "Are you going to wage war against communism or against the Russian people?" Rosenberg asks to point out where the difference is. I say: the difference is that if you wage war against communism, that is, to liberate the Russian people from communism, then they will be on your side, and you will win the war; if you wage war against Russia, and not against communism, the Russian

the people will be against you, and you will lose the war.

Rosenberg frowns and says that the most ungrateful trade is political Cassandra. But I object that in this case it is possible to predict events. Let's put it another way: Russian patriotism is lying on the road, and the Bolsheviks have been trampling it underfoot for a quarter of a century. Whoever raises it will win the war. You raise - you win; Stalin will raise - he will win. In the end, Rosenberg declares that they have a Fuhrer who determines the political plan for the war, and that he, Rosenberg, is not yet aware of this plan. I take it as a simple excuse. Meanwhile, however paradoxical it may seem, it later turns out that this is true (I will find out only after two months in the last conversation with Leibbrandt, who will explain to me why I was called and why they are talking to me).

The fact is that at this moment, in mid-June, both Rosenberg and Leibbrandt fully admit that after the outbreak of the war, it may be necessary to create an anti-Bolshevik Russian government. They did not see any Russians for this. Either as a result of my Finnish action, or as a result of Mannerheim's recall, they come to my candidacy, and they hastily call me to look at me and weigh me (according to Leibbrandt, they seemed to accept me). But a few days later the war begins, and Rosenberg receives a long-term predetermined appointment - Minister of the Territories Occupied in the East; and Leibbrandt - his first deputy. The first time Rosenberg comes to Hitler for directives, he says: "My Fuhrer, there are two ways to manage the areas occupied in the East, the first is with the help of the German administration, the Gauleiters; the second is to create a Russian anti-Bolshevik government, which would also be the center of attraction for anti-Bolshevik forces in Russia." Hitler interrupts him: "There can be no question of any Russian government; Russia will be a German colony and will be ruled by the Germans. After that, Rosenberg no longer has the slightest interest in me and no longer accepts me. After a conversation with Rosenberg and Leibbrandt, I live for several days in a special position - I know the secret of capital importance and live in complete secrecy. On the morning of June 22, going out into the street and seeing the serious faces of people reading newspapers, I understand what's the matter. In the newspaper - Hitler's manifesto

about the war. In the manifesto there is not a word about the Russian state, about the liberation of the Russian people; on the contrary, everything is about the space necessary for the German people in the East, etc. Everything is clear. The Fuhrer starts a war to turn Russia into his colony. This plan is completely idiotic to me; for me, Germany lost the war - it's only a matter of time; and communism wins the war. What can be done here?

I tell Deringer that I want to see Rosenberg. Deringer politely answers me that he will tell Dr. Rosenberg about my desire. A few days later he answers me that Dr. Rosenberg is busy in connection with the organization of a new ministry and cannot see me. I sit in Berlin and do nothing. I would like to go back to Paris, but Deringer tells me that only Rosenberg or Leibbrandt can decide this question. I'm waiting.

A month later, I was unexpectedly received by Leibbrandt. He already leads the entire ministry, in the waiting room there are a bunch of Gauleiters in general's uniforms. He asks me if I persist in my predictions in the light of events - the German army is victoriously advancing, the prisoners number in the millions. I answer that I am quite sure of the defeat of Germany; the political plan of war is meaningless; now everything is clear - they want to turn Russia into a colony, the press interprets the Russians as untermensch, the prisoners are starved. The conversation ends in nothing, and Leibbrandt answers my desire to return to Paris evasively - wait a little longer. What?

Another month I spend in some kind of honorable captivity. Suddenly Leibbrandt calls me. He asks me again: the German army is rapidly advancing from victory to victory, there are already several million prisoners, the population greets the Germans with a bell ringing, do I insist on my forecasts. I answer that more than ever. The population meets with a bell ringing, the soldiers surrender; in two or three months it will become known throughout Russia that you are starving the prisoners, that you are treating the population like cattle. Then they will stop giving up, they will start fighting, and the population will shoot you in the back. And then the war will go differently. Leibbrandt informs me that he called me to offer me to lead

political work among the prisoners - I carried out this work with such success in Finland. I flatly refuse. What kind of political work can we talk about? What can the one who comes to them say to the captives? That the Germans want to turn Russia into a colony and Russians into slaves, and that this should be helped? Yes, the prisoners will send such an agitator to him and they will be right. Leibbrandt finally loses patience: "You are, after all, a freelance immigrant, and you talk like an ambassador of a great power." - "I am the representative of a great power - the Russian people; since I am the only Russian with whom your government speaks, it is my duty to tell you all this." Leibbrandt says: "We can shoot you, or send you to the roads to chop stones, or force you to carry out our policy." "Doctor Leibbrandt, you are mistaken. You can really shoot me or send me to the camp to chop stones, but you cannot force me to carry out your policy. Leibbrandt's reaction is unexpected. He gets up and shakes my hand. "We are talking to you because we consider you a real person." We are again arguing about prospects, about German politics, speaking about which I do not choose terms very much, explaining that on the level of politics on which we are talking, you can call a spade a spade. But Leibbrandt

objected more and more sluggishly. Finally, making an effort on himself, he says: "I have complete confidence in you; and I'll tell you something that's very dangerous for me to say: I think you're right about everything." I jump up: "And Rosenberg?" "Rosenberg thinks the same as me." "But why doesn't Rosenberg try to convince Hitler of the complete disastrous nature of his policies?" "Here," says Leibbrandt, "you are completely unaware of the matter. Hitler can never be convinced of anything. First of all, he only speaks, does not let anyone say anything and does not listen to anyone. And if Rosenberg had tried to convince him, the result would have been only this: Rosenberg would have been immediately removed from his post as unable to understand and carry out the thoughts and decisions of the Fuhrer, and sent as a soldier to the Eastern Front. That's all". "But if you are

convinced of the futility of Hitler's policy, how can you follow it?" "This is much more complicated than you think," says Leibbrandt, "and this is not only my problem, but the problem of all the leaders of our movement. When Hitler began to make his decisions, which seemed to us insane - the occupation of the Ruhr, the violation of the Treaty of Versailles, the arming of Germany, the occupation of Austria, the occupation of Czechoslovakia, each time we expected failure and death. He won every time. Gradually, we got the impression that this person, perhaps, sees and understands what we do not see and do not understand, and we have no choice but to follow him. It was the same with Poland, and with France, and with Norway, and now in Russia we are moving forward and will soon be in Moscow. Maybe again we are wrong, but he is right?

"Doctor Leibbrandt, I have nothing to do here, I want to go back to Paris." "But since you are against our policy, you will work against us." "Alas, I can promise you that I will not work for anyone or against anyone. I cannot work with the Bolsheviks - I am an enemy of communism; I can't deal with you - I don't share either your ideology or your politics; I can't with the allies either - they are betraying Western civilization by entering into a criminal alliance with communism. I am left to conclude that Western civilization has decided to commit suicide and that there is no place for me in all this. I will be engaged in science and technology."

Leibbrandt agrees. Before leaving at Larionov's apartment, I tell the leaders of the solidarist organization (Poremsky, Rozhdestvensky and others) about my negotiations with Rosenberg and Leibbrandt. They leaked to Berlin, wanting to penetrate into Russia after the German army. I tell them that it is completely hopeless - the population will soon be all against the Germans; to be with them means to join the partisanship against the Germans; For what? To help the Bolsheviks again subjugate the population to their power? Nothing can be done. But solidarists still want to try something. They will soon see that the situation is hopeless. Returning to Paris, I also make a report to representatives of Russian organizations. The

conclusions of the report are extremely disappointing. Among those present there are Gestapo informants. One of them asks me a provocative question: "So, in your opinion, is it necessary or not necessary to cooperate with the Germans?" I answer that it is not necessary - in this cooperation there is no

meaning.

Of course, it will reach the Gestapo. To the honor of the Germans, I must say that until the end of the war I will live quietly in Paris, study physics and technology, and the Germans will never lay a finger on me.

And at the end of the war, before the occupation of Paris, I have to go to Belgium for a while, and communist bandits who come to kill me will not find me at home.

Conclusion

During the Second World War, I withdrew from politics and for the next thirty years was engaged in science and technology. But my experience of being in the center of communist power and the resulting knowledge of communism allowed me to continue the study of communism and its evolution throughout the following years. This study, having confirmed the observations of my active communist experience, enables me to conclude my book with some conclusions, which I wish to share with the reader. I have already spoken about the worthlessness of

Marxist economic theory. The Marxist prediction of events turned out to be just as false and beaten by life. Let me remind you of Marx's analysis and forecast: in the world, with its rapid industrialization, there is a severe proletarianization and impoverishment of the masses and the concentration of capital in a few hands; the proletarian social revolution will therefore come in the most industrialized countries. In fact, the opposite happened. In

the developed industrial countries, it was not the proletarianization and impoverishment of the working masses that took place, but an extraordinary rise in their standard of living. The process of evolution of capital is also known, which, for example, in leading America long ago left the stage of billionaires, passed the stage of huge anonymous companies with the decisive influence of their directors and is now in the stage of the broadest democratization of capital - the vast majority of the shares of large enterprises are dispersed among the entire mass of workers and employees, which are co-owners and accomplices of enterprises. America is ten to twenty years ahead, what happens in it is then repeated in other developed capitalist countries. As for the social revolution, it did not take place in any of the developed

industrial countries and, on the contrary, it widely flooded the poor, backward and uncultured countries. Let us leave Marxist theory and move on to practice. The practice of communist revolution is the practice of Lenin and Leninism. It lies in the fact that the more a country is poor, wild, backward, ignorant and uncultured, the greater the chances for a communist revolution. If you think about it, this is not surprising. The essence of communism is to incite envy and hatred among the poor against the richer. The poorer the people, the simpler they are, the more ignorant they are, the greater the success of communist propaganda, the greater the chances for the success of the communist revolution. It is provided in the countries of Africa, in the poor human anthills of Asia; in the developed countries of Europe, it has so far been able to be introduced only on Soviet tanks - by force. Needless to say, envy and hatred are used only to incite some sections of the population against others, for social enmity, for suppression, for extermination, in order to achieve power. And then everything turns into a well-organized penal servitude, in which the whole country is imprisoned, and the narrow communist elite commands it.

The goal of the operation is a world armed robbery and the creation of a world slave society, the robotization of the whole world, which will be brutally controlled, widely using absolute power, soulless and stupid bureaucrats of the "party".

This means the collapse of our Western civilization. Civilizations are mortal; barbarians, who want to replace ours have a name - communism.

(I imagine the resentment these lines will cause in a young, believing communist. When I joined the Communist Party in 1919, I would have rejected them with the same indignation. But there are already 60 years of communist experience. Do they convince anyone? Alas, only those who experience the communist experience on themselves. And the indignant young communist needs communism to triumph in his country and last ten years, so that he understands from his own experience that what is written above -

Truth. But, alas, then it is already too late: communism exists to take power and use it; but having taken it, he does not give it back. There is no going back. And if by chance there is Dubcek at the head of the hierarchy in the country, who wants to establish human socialism instead of wolf socialism, then although the entire party and the entire population will be for him, Soviet tanks will come and quickly put everything in place).

Does our civilization want to defend itself, to protect everything that makes up its essence - freedom, freedom of life and creativity, humanism, peaceful and friendly human coexistence? Our civilization is

historically Christian. In past ages, the Christian religion was its cement and its base. But those times have passed. It is in a period of rapid and difficult mutation. At the same time, the environment of life is changing at an ever-increasing pace. Science, technology, economics are changing life faster in two or three decades than in the entire previous century. On the contrary, the psychology of the masses at its core changes incomparably more slowly and lags more and more behind the changing situation. And the political views and aspirations of the population lag far behind the turbulent changes in life. This leads to real and deep catastrophes. It would seem that it is the duty of the leading political circles of the country to take into account the changes, to draw conclusions, to define with their own thought the inert and lagging thought of the masses and to propose the necessary solutions corresponding to the changed situation. But the democratic way of government does not allow this. Political people must be mandated by the masses. Woe to them if they try to get ahead of the masses with their thoughts - they will not be understood, they will not be supported, they will not be elected. They do not have to lead the masses, but follow them.

Two broad roads now determine the political paths of the movement of the masses. One of them - stake on the future - socialism. The other is the path of yesterday - nationalism.

Let us make a reservation right away that the national idea and nationalism are two different things. The idea of a nation is normal. It has long been known that differential equations are solved in the same way in Beijing and in Paris, but love and hate on the banks of the Yang Tse Kiang is not at all the same as on the banks of the Seine. Culture can develop only within national frameworks, and they represent a unique, unique and necessary frame of life. Nationalism is something quite different. It is "my nation above all others", and I pursue its interests first of all (against the interests of other nations). Nationalism is the doctrine of ferocious national selfishness. It is possible that it was appropriate one and a half or two centuries ago, when nations lived apart, when their ties with each other almost did not exist. But the 19th century brought rapid change, technology, economics, rail and sea transportation, world trade and the interdependence of the world economy, the colossal capabilities of military technology developed, and at the beginning of the 20th century, that this nationalist doctrine was the guiding doctrine of the great powers became the first world threat. . This was confirmed by the First World War that emerged from it - a great catastrophe, a cruel blow to our civilization. It led to the collapse of the world order, and to the fall of the leading role of the white race, and to the communist revolution in Russia, and to the beginning of the world civil war. What have the leaders of nations learned from this experience? Obviously nothing. Because Italy and Germany, wishing to create a barrier against communism, did not find a better weapon for this than catastrophic and just condemned by the bitter practice of life, nationalism, and even ultranationalism in a superlative degree. The only salvation of civilization is the unity of civilized peoples against communism. But there is nothing worse than ultranationalism, which, instead of unity, raises some nations against others and not only divides their forces, but leads to senseless wars between them. There is nothing more profitable for communism, there is nothing more pleasant than this nationalism. And the communists in every possible way inflate it. He is the main condition for their victory.

Having learned nothing from the experience of the First World War, the leading political circles of the great powers with a light heart threw the whole world into a second great catastrophe; both they and the masses were guided by the same doctrine of nationalism. And the communists knew that for them there is nothing better - a war inevitably follows a revolution. Did the political cretins who ruled the great powers foresee that after the Second World War half the world would be in the hands of the communists? They didn't foresee anything. They were only shown how dangerous it is when the political thought of leaders has no value.

And how important, if a civilization wants to live and defend itself, that a different political thought should guide its leaders. How much would change in the world if it were understood and made into a guiding formula in relations between peoples that *correctly understood national interests always coincide with the interests of all other nations*. National selfishness can now only destroy the defense of the free world. The salvation of the free world is only in its unity.

The other path, which is increasingly gaining the confidence of the masses, is the socialist one. It could be said that the main process of mutation of our society in recent times is the transition from the base of the Christian religion to the base of the socialist religion. But what is socialism? The Marshal of France said: "To name correctly is to understand correctly." It is not easy to understand what real socialism is. First of all, because the Communists, as always, using false terms for the purpose of false propaganda, constantly introduce them into general practice. Only now, instead of saying "liberal exchange society", does not say "capitalism" after the communists; and when communists call the wolf slave-owning system they created socialism, everyone accepts this false term (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). Meanwhile, it is obvious that communism covers up its system with a socialist label to deceive the masses. Real socialism "with a human face" should have nothing to do with wolf socialism

Marxists.

Let's just say that, at best, the socialism of the masses who believe in it represents a vague ideal of a better life and greater social justice. This is also the ideal of a liberal free society, whose adherents do not accept the term "socialism", since, firstly, it is defiled by the communists and their little respected allies, and secondly, it allows the equivalence of the false "socialism" of Marxism.

It is known that religions are an object of faith, and the categories of reason are of little use to them. It is also known that despite this, the new conquering religions have great power. True, religions are rapidly divided into sects, interpretations and heresies, which have a remarkable degree of intolerance towards each other. The widespread dissemination of the socialist religion in the world signifies not so much its victory as the emergence and development of new types of internecine enmity. If socialism were victorious in the world, there would be as many socialisms as countries, if not more, and the enmity and struggle between them would be fierce. Take the communist world. For communist China, communist Russia is a bigger enemy than any "capitalist" country. The weakness of the idea of a liberal free society is that, unlike Christianity

(which offers heaven and an afterlife that cannot be tested by experience), it offers a socialist paradise on earth that is tested by experience. Communism gets out of the difficulty by saying that no matter what the experienced population thinks about this, it can no longer change anything in its fate. You can't even escape from this paradise - it is fenced with machine guns and barbed wire. Such a practice should be alien to real socialism, and its prospects are difficult.

But just like nationalism, socialism is not an ideology on the basis of which our civilization can build its defense. Since socialism, even in its best (non-Marxist) variants, proceeds from criticism and denial of our civilization, wishing and hoping to replace it with something else, and, in its view, better.

It would seem that the picture is rather bleak, and it is difficult to give an encouraging answer to the question of whether the West will defend its civilization. The masses follow communist propaganda, socialist propaganda, but the most sober and steadfast elements see no other point of support than the dangerous old socialism. And the ruling political circles, the same ones that at the beginning of the 20th century did not see and did not understand that their nationalist ideology was leading the world to catastrophe and revolution, are also now engaged in a small game of big powers and national egoisms and do not see that the world is disastrous path.

But they do not see that the world is at a turning point. Our civilization can turn onto another road, the road of salvation. If it were a pious wish, it would not cost much. Fortunately for

of this turn there is a base and there are opportunities. The ruling political circles do not see them either. Let's look closely at the history of the 20th century. The century began in a euphoric atmosphere - everything developed rapidly: technology, economics, national wealth; the belief in limitless progress was universal, and that life would continually improve, and that excellent social changes would come that would bring a better lot to the poor and dispossessed. The world war came, and it was a world catastrophe. Empires collapsed, the prestige of Europe and the white race, a world civil war began. But they still thought that everything would work out and continued the old game with old bones in national selfishness and racial hatred. The second world catastrophe came, and, despite the victorious reports of a great victory (and it was mainly the subversion, revolution and communism that won, and they all trumpeted the most about the glorious victory), doubts began to spread widely in the world - the result was too catastrophic, and the path of the disintegration of society became too clear.

And the revision and reassessment of the situation began. And when they looked closely and calculated, little was left of the optimism of the beginning of the century and the belief in unlimited progress. It turned out that the world is heading for a complete disaster. Galloping demography tomorrow will lead to the fact that humanity will not be able to be fed, a thin layer of agricultural soil is being rapaciously destroyed, mineral reserves of raw materials and energy have been exhausted and come to an end, the ecological balance of nature has been disturbed, the sea - tomorrow's food reserve - is dying, poisoned by man, and that's all, what science and technology brought, it would seem, to the benefit of man, he turned against himself. And the apotheosis of everything - the atomic bomb, unprecedented possibilities of destruction, and for the first time in the history of mankind the possibility of the complete destruction of the human race; and not theoretical, but hanging overhead the threat of a possible world war and the insanely and continuously growing arsenal of the atomic death of mankind. And the bright prospects for a better social life? For a long time, but in vain, the truth about this experience tried to break into the light, and the time for it came, and the bomb of Solzhenitsyn's "Gulag Archipelago" exploded, and at the sight of sixty million dead

witnesses, this illusion also collapsed. If all this happened a century ago, it would have determined the painful and long work of awareness and reassessment of values in a narrow circle of elites. Now radio, newspapers and, especially, television throw every day and every hour in the face of the broad masses of the population all and the latest information about everything that is happening in the world. And this whole process of reassessment, all the consciousness of threats, all the fear of the fatality of the path on which we are walking, quickly became the property of the broad masses of the people. The population of the advanced developed industrial countries is in fear and trembling.

This consciousness, this fear of an impending catastrophe - this is now the greatest chance for a saving turn, this is the base that makes it possible for our civilization to turn and follow a different path. The turn requires the broadest

participation and approval of the masses of the people. To smart formulas - the fruit of a dry mind - the masses of the population are indifferent. They are driven only by feelings and emotions. To turn, you need an emotional base, and it is there. The question of this turn coincides with the question of the salvation of mankind, and this gives it the greatest significance. And puts it on a different plane than the question of political struggle and protection; puts in a plane global. It is necessary to find a way on which humanity would avoid not only the stupid bureaucratic slave-owning communist system, which, due to its misanthropy, mediocrity and lack of creative thought, is not able to solve all the huge and difficult problems that have confronted the human race, but a way that would solve everything these problems. But if this turn is necessary, if it is possible, it is by no means inevitable. It may not happen.

There is a base for it, an opportunity has appeared that did not exist thirty or forty years ago, but we still need to determine the right path, the right methods, and we need to find real people who could do all this. And the movement must be in accordance with tasks of a different kind, a different style and a different scope than the usual political turmoil. The future of the human race is at stake.

Editorial

Memoirs of Boris Bazhanov is one of the first memoirs describing Stalin as a dictator and his entourage from the inside. The special value of this book, published for the first time abroad, lies in its authenticity, in the fact that it belongs to Stalin's direct assistant, who since 1923 held the position of technical secretary of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks.

After escaping in 1928 through Persia to the West, Boris Bazhanov published a series of articles and a book in France, the main interest of which was to describe the real mechanism of totalitarian communist power, which gradually squeezed the whole country in the grip of political terror. The book details the behind-the-scenes political intrigues in the Kremlin, starting with the expulsion of Trotsky, as well as Stalin's subsequent actions to eliminate his associates and rivals from the political scene - Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov, Frunze, Bukharin, and others. Many chapters of B. Bazhanov's memoirs are perceived as action-packed political and criminal detective story. Stalin was afraid of the revelations of

B. Bazhanov and, according to some evidence, was the most zealous reader of his publications: as defectors from the Soviet embassy in France later showed, Stalin demanded that every new article of his former secretary be immediately sent to him by plane to Moscow. Boris Bazhanov's book was published in France by the

Third Wave publishing house in 1980. Chapters from the book about B. Bazhanov's escape across the state border were published in Ogonyok. The new edition of "Memoirs of the Former Secretary of Stalin" will undoubtedly be of interest to many readers who want to know the truth about events and facts that have been carefully hidden from the people for political reasons for more than seventy years.